BBC

ELIZABETH'S GREATEST RIVAL?

Why Catherine de Medici enraged the Virgin Queen

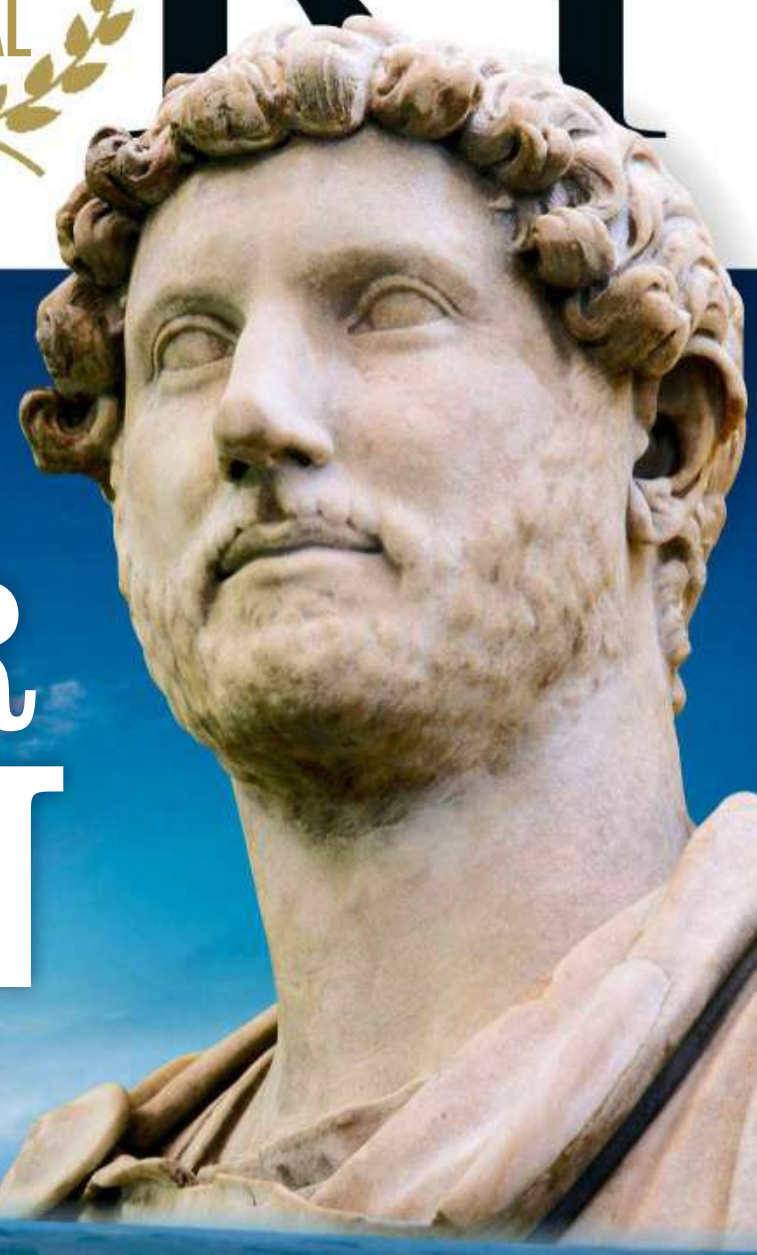
HISTORY

HADRIAN'S WALL SPECIAL

BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING HISTORY MAGAZINE
August 2022 / **www.historyextra.com**

ROME'S BATTLE FOR BRITAIN

The bloody road from Caesar's invasion to the building of Hadrian's Wall



Women on the wall: Everyday life at the frontiers of empire

Roman tourist trap: Why ancient visitors flocked to the wall

Back to the 1970s?
Cost of living crises through the ages

THE LONG SHADOW OF THE **FALKLANDS WAR**

How to stop a Mongol invasion

The secrets to defeating the medieval superpower

THE ROYAL MINT®

THE ORIGINAL MAKER

Consign Your Coins to a Royal Mint Auction

If you are looking to sell your coin or coin collection, The Royal Mint's Collector Services team can help you find them a new home. By consigning your coins to The Royal Mint's regular auctions, you can reach a wide audience of potential buyers and make sure you get a fair price, with competitive selling fees, often as low as 0%.

To find out more, visit royalmint.com/consignments

royalmint.com

CELEBRATE | COLLECT | INVEST | SECURE | DISCOVER

WELCOME

AUGUST 2022

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

Requiring the labour of thousands of Roman troops, and taking several years to complete, **Hadrian's Wall** was a monumental construction project. According to tradition, work began on the wall in AD 122, and so this year sees the 1,900th anniversary of the great barrier that divided "the barbarians from the Romans".

In this month's edition we're exploring Hadrian's Wall **from multiple perspectives**. Why did the wall come to be built in the first place? What kind of people visited the wall in the early years? And what was life like for those living in its shadow over the centuries? You'll find the answers in a series of articles beginning on page 26.

Here in 2022, it's not walls going up but prices. As the cost of living accelerates, commentators have drawn parallels with previous periods of inflation, notably the 1970s. But how sensible are these comparisons? On page 20 Phil Tinline surveys the past **100 years of rising prices** to see how previous administrations sought to respond to inflationary pressures, and whether there are any lessons for today.

And this is just a small taster of some of the topics we're covering in another packed issue. Elsewhere in the magazine you can discover the military secrets to **defeating the Mongols** (page 50), the life story of an **Edwardian speed queen** (page 46), the bitter rivalry between **Elizabeth I and Catherine de Medici** (page 74), and the complex legacies of the **Falklands War** four decades on (page 60).

I hope you enjoy the issue.

Rob Attar
Editor

THREE THINGS I'VE LEARNED THIS MONTH

1. TV crimes
In the latest instalment of his history of the BBC, David Hendy relays the unlikely story of a 1986 prison riot caused by a loss of TV reception during a nail-biting episode of *EastEnders* (page 70).

2. Ice giant
The frost fairs on the frozen Thames are the stuff of legend, but I'd not realised before that an elephant had once traversed the icy river (page 59).

3. Taste from waste
I was intrigued to read in our *Explore* piece on Heligan that the gardens' famous pineapples are grown in pits heated with manure (page 92).

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS

Phil Tinline
"The fear of inflation and its terrible consequences has long haunted our politicians – from nightmares of financial chaos, through the ruin of the middle class, to the death of democracy itself."
Phil traces how inflation has shaped British political life over the last century on page 20

Estelle Paranque
"Elizabeth I and Catherine de Medici were extremely intelligent, extremely powerful women. But what's very interesting as well is that one woman was going to be remembered and glorified for centuries to come, the other much less so."
Estelle untangles the tumultuous relationship of the two powerhouses on page 74

Nicholas Morton
"The Mongol invasions of the 13th century inaugurated a period of rapid change both in the near east and elsewhere. Cultures previously separated by vast distances suddenly found themselves interacting at close quarters."
Nicholas reveals how empires battled to stave off the Mongols on page 50

Rachel Harris-Gardiner
"You couldn't invent Dorothy Levitt: winning motor races in 1905, advocating driving for women and becoming a household name. Yet when you investigate further, you see she invented herself."
Rachel spotlights a record-breaking female racing driver on page 46

Contact us

PHONE
Subscriptions & back issues 03330 162115
Editorial 0117 300 8699

EMAIL
Subscriptions & back issues www.buysubscriptions.com/contactus
Editorial historymagazine@historyextra.com

POST
Subscriptions & back issues *BBC History Magazine*, PO Box 3320, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton, NN4 7BF. Basic annual subscription rates: UK: £48, Eire/Europe: £67, ROW: £69

In the **US/Canada** you can contact us at: PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037, BHIcustserv@cdsfulfillment.com, britsubs.com/history, Toll-free 800-342-3592

ON THE COVER: A MARBLE BUST OF THE EMPEROR HADRIAN: ALAMY, HADRIAN'S WALL, UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE, NORTHUMBRIA, ENGLAND: ADAM WOOLFITT – ROBERT HARDING. ELIZABETH I: ALAMY. MONGOLS: GETTY IMAGES. THIS PAGE: GETTY IMAGES /ALAMY/GLEN MCBETH/JENI NOTT/JAMIE SIMONDS/SARAH-JANE FIELD

CONTENTS

AUGUST 2022

74

FEATURES

20 Boom-and-bust Britain

Phil Tinline compares today's cost-of-living crisis with bouts of inflation that plagued the UK over the past century

HADRIAN'S WALL SPECIAL

26 Britain before Hadrian

In the first of three special features marking the 1900th anniversary of Hadrian's Wall, **Richard Hingley** tracks the Roman conquest of Britain

34 Frontier tourists

Rob Collins follows the long history of tourism and souvenirs at the wall

39 Women on the wall

Bronwen Riley reveals what a group of artefacts tell us about women's lives at the very edge of the Roman empire

46 Edwardian speed queen

Rachel Harris-Gardiner introduces Dorothy Levitt, who smashed records and stereotypes racing cars and boats

50 Scourge of the Mongols

Nicholas Morton explains how Egypt's Mamluk empire repulsed the Mongol army's advances

60 Aftermath of the Falklands War

Four decades after the conflict, **Matthew C Benwell, Catriona Pennell** and **Alasdair Pinkerton** explore its long legacy

70 When a soap saved Auntie

In the eighth part of our series tracing the history of the BBC, **David Hendy** discusses the enduring *EastEnders* effect

EVERY MONTH

This month in history

7 **History news**
10 **Michael Wood** on one of the greatest Irish people in history
12 **Anniversaries**
17 **Hidden Histories**
18 **Letters**

58 **Q&A** Your history questions answered

Books

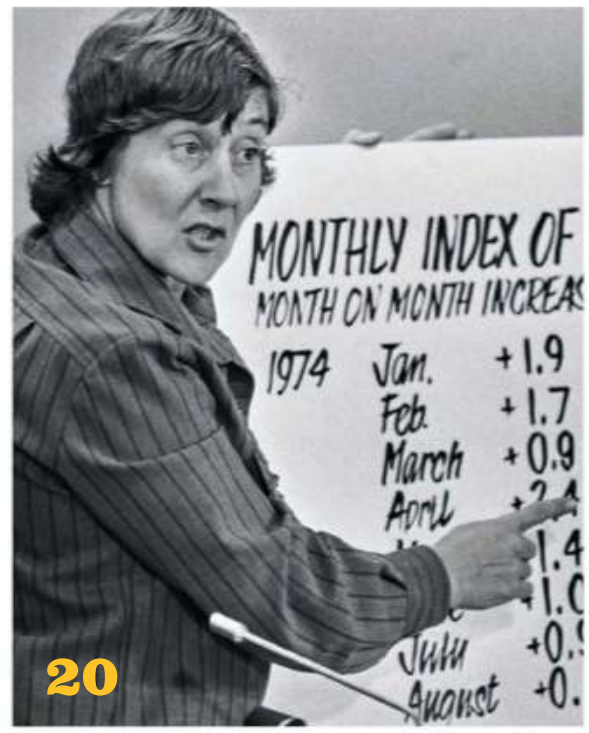
74 **Interview:** Estelle Paranque on the relationship between Elizabeth I and Catherine de Medici
78 New history **books reviewed**

Encounters

86 **Diary:** What to see and do this month
92 **Explore:** Lost Gardens of Heligan, Cornwall
94 **Travel:** Amman, Jordan

96 **Prize crossword**

98 **My history hero** Rory Stewart selects Thomas More



20

50

60

46

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY/JAMIE SIMONDS/ROBERT HARDING

HADRIAN'S WALL SPECIAL

34

39

26 "The Romans almost certainly intended to conquer the whole of Britain when they started their campaign in AD 43"

MORE FROM US

SUBSCRIBE

SAVE WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE TODAY

See page 68 for details

ENGAGE

HISTORY EXTRA

historyextra.com

The website of *BBC History Magazine* is filled with exciting content on British and world history, and includes an extensive archive of magazine content.

Social Media

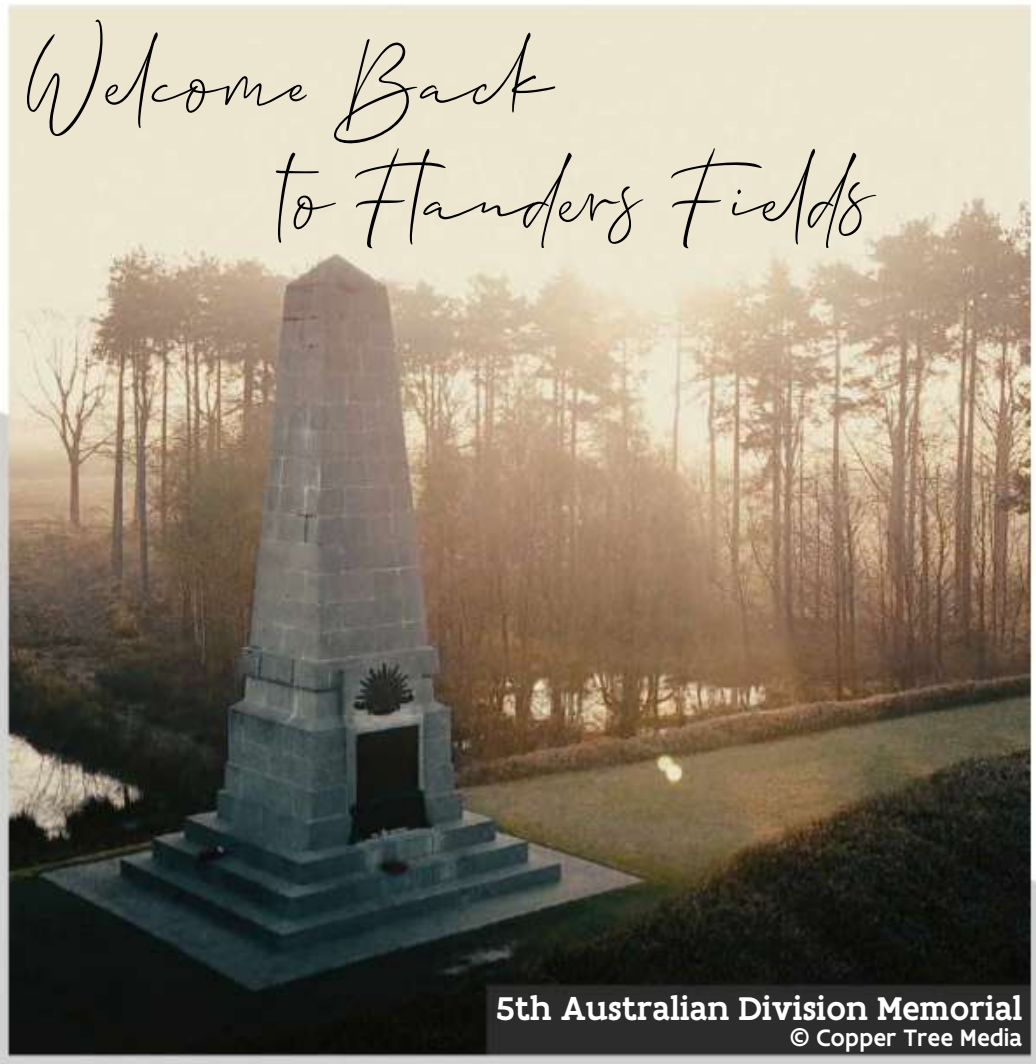
@historyextra historyextra @historyextra

LISTEN

Our award-winning podcast is released six times a week. Why not check it out today, and explore our archive of more than 1,000 previous episodes. Download episodes for free from iTunes and other providers, or via **historyextra.com/podcast**

USPS Identification Statement BBC HISTORY (ISSN 1469-8552) (USPS 024-177) August 2022 is published 13 times a year under licence from BBC Studios by Immediate Media Company London Limited, Vineyard House, 44 Brook Green, Hammersmith, London W6 7BT, UK. Distributed in the US by NPS Media Group, 2 Enterprise Drive, Suite 420, Shelton, CT 06484. Periodicals postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE, PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037-0495.

ADVERTISEMENT



5th Australian Division Memorial
© Copper Tree Media

VISITFLANDERS

CWGC Tyne Cot Cemetery

Flanders Fields
© Westtoer

Ypres
© Thierry Caignie – Westtoer

The Last Post at The Menin Gate
© Milo Profi

Welcome Back to Flanders Fields Pass

Available for travel until 30 September 2022, the "Welcome Back to Flanders Fields Pass" offers visitors discounts or free entry to museums, day tours, tour guiding and more. Simply book an overnight stay with a participating accommodation facility in the region. For more details visit: **visitflanders.com/en/themes/flanders_fields/welcomeback**

"It's not the same without our visitors, we miss you" is the catch cry from the locals in Flanders Fields.

1914-18 Flanders Fields

Located in the west of Belgium, the region of Flanders Fields is synonymous with some of the most treacherous battlefields of World War One.

Despite the devastation of the region over 100 years ago, today Flanders Fields is a beautiful and serene area, interspersed with charming cobblestone towns and villages. Visitors can see and do a lot in a just a few days in the compact region.

At the heart of Flanders Fields is Ypres (or Ieper as it is known officially in Flemish). There is something inexplicable about the connection many visitors feel when in Ypres, whether it's a sense of living history, a family association or the warm welcome from the locals, it's a special place that goes straight to the heart of travellers. Standing proudly in the centre of Ypres is the magnificent Cloth Hall, a reminder that this city was one of Europe's most important trading centres, and that today houses both the In Flanders Fields Museum and Yper Museum; it's also possible to ascend the building's belfry tower to enjoy far-reaching views over the surrounding landscapes. A short walk takes you to the Menin Gate memorial, where, every evening at 8 o'clock, visitors can observe the Last Post ceremony being performed by the volunteer buglers of the Last Post Association in honour of the soldiers that died during the First World War.

Outside of Ypres, there are many nearby points of interest for those looking to discover the history of this region. As well as the hundreds of cemeteries, including Tyne Cot, the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world and Lijssenthoek, adjacent to where a WW1 field hospital was located, the area has many museums, renowned for welcoming visitors of all ages, such the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917, Hooge Crater Museum and Talbot House, the everyman's club in Poperinge,

Stephen Lodewyck, Director of the In Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres says, "Since 2020 we miss our visitors from abroad, who travel to share their history with us on the former battlefields, under the Menin Gate during the Last Post and in the "In Flanders Fields Museum" in Ypres. But out of sight is not out of mind, on the contrary, during the lockdown investments and refurbishments have enhanced the attractions on offer.

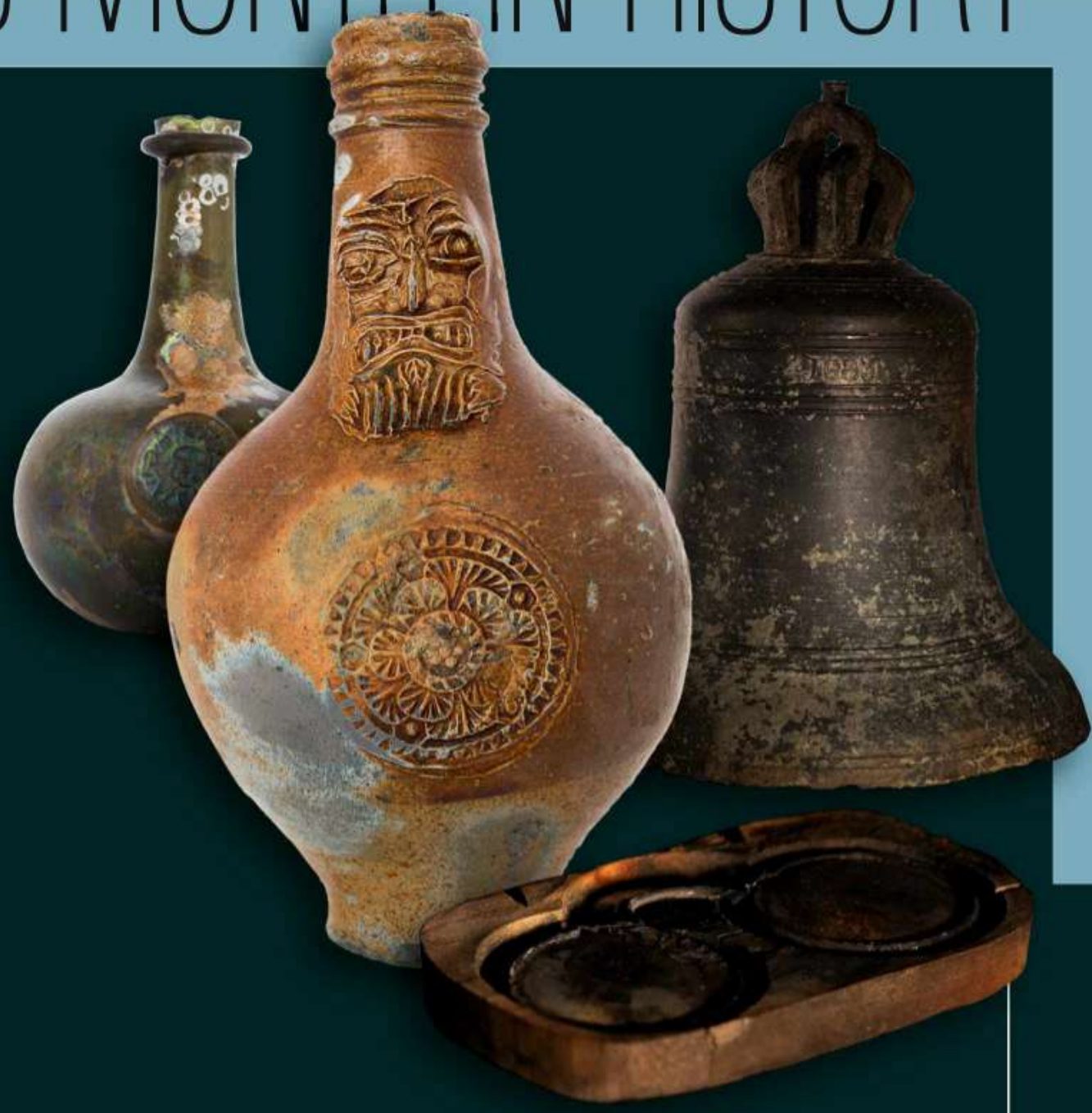
Aside from WW1 history, Flanders Fields is also well known for being home to some of the best breweries in Belgium and some excellent chocolatiers. There are also numerous walking and cycling paths available for those looking for an active way to discover the region's history and landscapes.

Flanders Fields looks forward to welcoming you soon – whether it be a first time visit or to reconnect with the region.

VISITFLANDERS.COM

@flandersfields14_18

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY



EYE-OPENER

Secrets from the deep

The discovery of a Royal Navy warship which sank off the coast of Norfolk in 1682 – complete with a trove of treasures including the jug, bottle, ship's bell, and spectacles pictured right – has been hailed as Britain's most important maritime find since the *Mary Rose*.

The wreck of the *Gloucester*, shown below, was first located by brothers Julian and Lincoln Barnwell in 2007, but has been kept secret until now in order to protect the site. The ship was on a journey from England to Scotland when, early in the morning of 6 May, it hit a sandbank off Great Yarmouth and sank, leading to the deaths of at least 130 people.

The disaster is also remarkable because of one of its most high-profile passengers: James Stuart, Duke of York, who escaped with moments to spare and, three years later, succeeded his brother Charles II as king of England, Ireland and Scotland.

» Turn the page for an interview about the discovery with maritime expert Claire Jowitt

NORFOLK HISTORIC SHIP WRECKS

Have a story? Please email Matt Elton at matt.elton@immediate.co.uk

INTERVIEW

"What's already been recovered is extraordinary, but what's still down there is mind-blowing"

CLAIRE JOWITT, professor of Renaissance studies at UEA and lead researcher on the *Gloucester* project, tells us how the recently announced discovery of the 17th-century shipwreck could reshape our view of Britain's maritime past

Experts have uncovered a wide range of objects from the wreck, including these navigational instruments

What do we know about the journey the *Gloucester* was on when it sank?
The *Gloucester* was on its way to Scotland carrying up to 400 people, including James, Duke of York and Albany, heir to the throne of his brother, Charles II. By 1682 Charles was increasingly ill, meaning that noblemen had begun gravitating towards James – and many of them were on board, along with their servants. It was a packed ship.

Do we know why the ship sank?
The previous night, there had been quite an intense argument about the route to take to navigate treacherous sandbanks. James, clearly keen to get to Scotland, wanted to take the most direct route.

The next morning, the *Gloucester* hit the sandbanks and sank within an hour. James, hoping it could be saved, delayed abandoning ship – and royal protocol meant nobody else could leave before him. Had James decided to go sooner, more lives could have been saved – although we'll never know exactly, as we don't know how many people were on board. And there would have been even more deaths had it not been for the other vessels accompanying the *Gloucester*, which sent out lifeboats to rescue people.

Did the speed of the sinking determine what people left behind?
Definitely. The fact that people had to scramble to get off meant they didn't have time to get their possessions. It was first thing in the morning, too, and many people had been asleep. It wasn't as if everybody was ready to evacuate in an orderly fashion. I can only imagine the panic.

What kinds of objects have been found?
Around 150 bottles of wine have been discovered, some with their contents still intact – and not just the wine either, but the air between the wine and the cork. Bottles of 17th-century air! There's a whole range of other objects, too: cutlery, clothes, pipes, spectacles complete with spare lenses…

As a maritime expert, the potential this discovery holds must be very exciting.
What's already been recovered is extraordinary enough, but what's still down there is mind-blowing. The stern castle of the ship is probably blanketed under about three metres of sand, and if it's even at least partially intact that'll be fascinating. That's where the captain's cabin and apartments for the principal nobility would have been, so it would give us a first chance to see what a luxurious royal sea journey looked like.

What can this discovery tell us about the nation's place in the world at the time?
In the 17th century, Britain had ambitions to be a major imperial and colonial power – and to achieve that, it needed a large, effective navy, because this was a turbulent era in international relations. The history of the *Gloucester* itself shows us this: it had been involved in the Anglo-Spanish Wars and the Second and Third Anglo-Dutch Wars. But, by the 1670s, it needed a refit – a process that turned out to be very slow, because although the navy might have had the appetite to expand, it didn't necessarily have the adequate finances or materials required to maintain vessels.

What happens next? Do you think it's possible that the wreck can be raised, as was the case with the *Mary Rose*?
With the appropriate permissions, it might be possible to raise parts of the ship, while other discoveries could be made through the use of trenches. I can think of nothing better than to bring as much of this time capsule of royal travel to the surface as we can. A major exhibition is going to be held at Norwich Castle Museum from February to July 2023, and I'm privileged to be one of the co-curators. I think that, as an island nation, it will be incredible to make 17th-century history available for people to explore in the same way that the *Mary Rose* has done for the 16th century.

How does this discovery compare to that of the *Mary Rose*, which was found in 1971 and raised in 1982?
The Mary Rose Museum is brilliant, and if we are even half as good we'll be doing very well. But in some ways the comparison is unhelpful: this is a 17th-century ship, on a completely different journey, surrounded by its own fascinating politics.

One of the things that the *Mary Rose* research did really well was highlight the multicultural nature of its crew and diversify 16th-century maritime history. I want to tell the stories of as many of the people that died, and survived, as possible – not just those of the great men. As important as James is, we want to tell other stories, too. And the ship itself is the star. H

The sinking of the *Gloucester* as depicted in a c1682 painting. Multiple eyewitness accounts of the disaster still survive

LISTEN

Listen to an **extended version of this interview** on our podcast at *historyextra.com/podcast*

TALKING POINTS

Desperate measures?

In June, the UK government launched a review of the use of imperial measurements – and Twitter users were quick to weigh in on the historical dimension. **ANNA WHITELOCK** took stock

As the news broke of a public consultation on imperial weights and measures and their possible reintroduction in some business settings in the UK, Twitter reflected on how Britain looked set to return to the past. With some political suggestions that this was a "Brexit bonus", weights and measures inspector **Pippa Musgrave** (@PippaMusgrave) pointed out that there had been "no EU directive [to change to a metric system]. It was UK domestic law amending the UK Weights and Measures Act 1985 and Prices Act 1974… the legislation to remove [the imperial system] was a UK instrument amending a UK act of parliament. It had nothing to do with the EU."

Steve Analyst (@EmporersNewC) went even further back, noting that "a Select Committee appointed in 1895 recommended that the metric system of weights and measures should be legalised for all purposes, and that, after the lapse of two years, the metric system should be rendered compulsory by act of parliament". **Professor Mary Beard** (@wmarybeard) cheekily added: "I hope that everyone wanting [a] return to imperial weights and measures can multiply 1lb 12oz by three!"

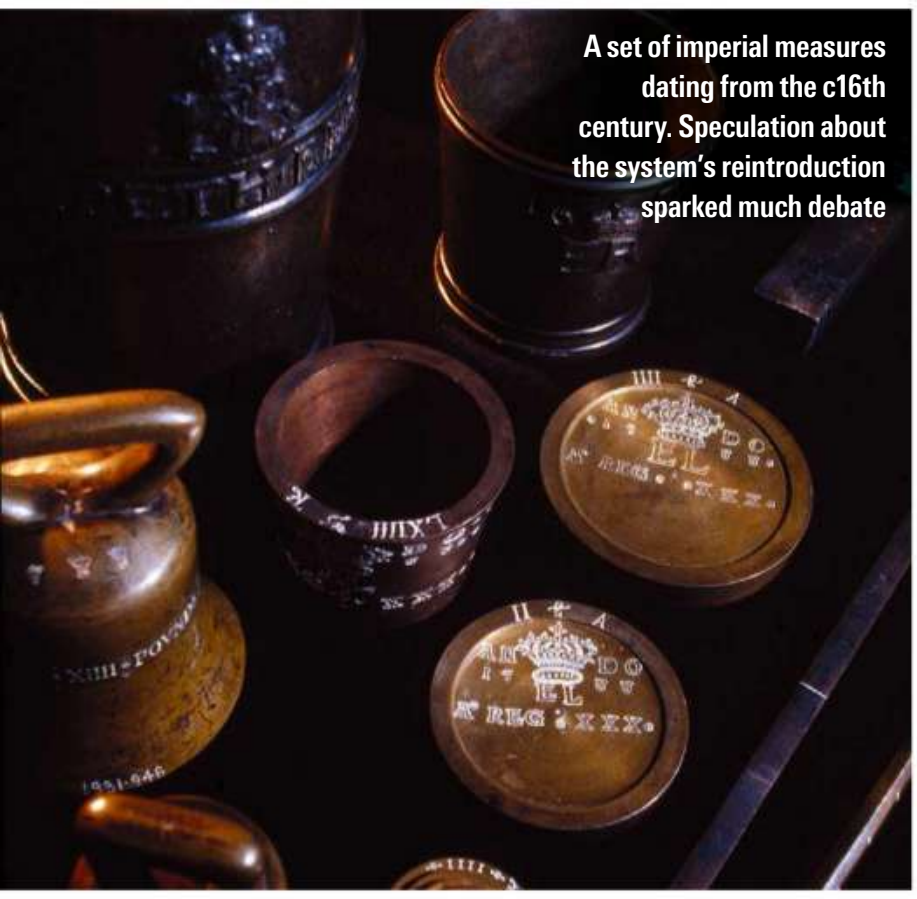
Tolgus Barncose of Kernow (@TolgusB), meanwhile, tweeted of how "she grew up in [the] UK under £sd, moved to Malaya which was decimal, returned to [the] UK in 1969 when the UK was changing – and it was flipping confusing. Having said that, students today need to understand that other countries are not always metric and knowing rough conversions will help them."

Join the debate at **twitter.com/historyextra**

Journalist **James Vincent** (@jjvincent) has, rather fortuitously, just published *Beyond Measure: The Hidden History of Measurement* (Faber & Faber), and explained: "One thing that needs to be understood first is that, for millennia, controls over weights and measures has genuinely been a huge deal for nations – not just the practical benefits that standardised units provide, but as a symbol of sovereignty… for most of history, ensuring people had access to consistent units of measure [was] as important as maintain[ing] roads or punishing criminals, and laws on the matter crop up in all sorts of important political documents from Magna Carta to the US constitution."

As the discussion revealed, history, politics and culture are all part of the story of weights and measures. That all said, I'm with **Michael Scanlan** (@ScanlanWithAnA) who noted, wryly: "I am perfectly happy to go back to 1960s weights and measures, as long as we couple this with a return to a 60s cost of living." H

Anna Whitelock is professor of the history of monarchy at City, University of London



A set of imperial measures dating from the c16th century. Speculation about the system's reintroduction sparked much debate

GETTY IMAGES/GEORGE RIDGEWAY/CORNWALL ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT-HISTORIC ENGLAND/ CAROLINE MARDON

"For millennia, control over weights and measures has been a huge deal for nations"

ANCIENT

Coin hoard is "largest from its period"

A set of hundreds of ancient coins found in a field near Ipswich may be the largest known hoard of precious metal from the reign of Roman emperor Claudius I, experts believe. The discovery, made by metal detectorist George Ridgway in 2019 but only made public in May, comprises more than 700 gold and silver coins made in the years between AD 41 and 54 – including a rare gold coin dating to just before the conquest of Britain in AD 43. The hoard (pictured below) has been provisionally valued at £65,000, with any reward split between Ridgway and the owner of the land on which it was found.

BOOKS

Stuart history wins major literary prize

A study of the violence and turbulence experienced in England under Stuart rule has won one of the UK's most prestigious book awards. *Devil-Land: England Under Siege, 1588–1688* by Clare Jackson (pictured), published by Allen Lane, was revealed as the winner of the Wolfson History Prize at a ceremony in June. Chair of judges David Cannadine praised Jackson's work as "a gripping book that brings to life the drama of 17th-century England – a time of rebellion, regicide, and civil war".

LISTEN

Listen to an **interview with Clare Jackson** on our podcast at *historyextra.com/devil-land*

MICHAEL WOOD ON...
THE GREATEST IRISH PERSON IN HISTORY

"The voice of this funny polymath can still be heard 1,200 years later"

An Irish writer friend of mine stayed with me recently. At the kitchen table, the conversation ranged from rugby to James Joyce (this year marks the 100th anniversary of the publication of *Ulysses* in book form) and Sally Rooney, bestselling author of *Normal People*. Then, as the candles burned low, the question arose: who was the greatest Irish person? We talked of playwrights, revolutionaries and poets. But for me (and as a medievalist I'm biased, I confess!) there was one person who stands out above all others – a forgotten thinker from the time when Ireland was the land of saints and scholars. Born c810–815 AD, we know him simply by his adopted name Iohannes Eriugena: John the Irish-born.

Teacher, doctor, poet and translator, John "the Scot" (the old word for the Irish) was born in war-torn Viking-Age Ireland, but in Francia became the greatest thinker between Aristotle and Aquinas. He wrote the most remarkable work of philosophy of the Middle Ages, attempting to reconcile east and west before the irrevocable split that still marks Christendom today. Eight centuries before Descartes, John even formulated the key philosophical idea *cogito, ergo sum*: I think, therefore I am.

Growing up under the Viking threat, John somewhere learned Latin and the rudiments of Greek. He studied traditional Irish medicine and scholarly theories about the body: about circulation, the lungs, optics and the physiology of sight, which had come down from Greek texts such as the writings of Galen.

He first appears in records of the Frankish court in Reims in 845 as "John the Doctor". There he found patronage as a teacher, translator and poet under King Charles the Bald, his Greek now up to the task of translating key Greek texts in an audacious attempt to meld the wisdom of the Greek east and Latin west. Charles was charmed by John's charismatic personality – and his cheeky familiarity.

In one famous story, John was sitting at a table with the king when, after the meal (and much drinking), "he did something that the Irish accept but which offended Frankish manners": he farted. The king leaned over the table and asked: "John, tell me what separates a *Scottus* (an Irishman) from a *sottus* (a fool)?" "Oh, just a table," John retorted. The king had to laugh.

Through John's poems and epigrams, we get a real sense of his personality: a sceptical, funny polymath who loved his wine and whose voice can still be heard 1,200 years later. But his humanistic ideas and free thinking condemned him as a heretic in the eyes of some of his contemporaries. "Your blasphemies and impudencies, O John," wrote his former friend Prudentius, bishop of Troyes, "are an insult to orthodox Christian belief."

His greatest work, *The Division of Nature*, is nothing less than an attempt to describe the world and our place in it. John used logic to show that humanity can never know God and that, if God is infinite, then he cannot even know himself – he is beyond any definition, literally beyond reason. We humans, then, can know only that he is, not *what* he is. Not surprisingly, *The Division of Nature* was later solemnly condemned to be burned by the pope. Then, after its first appearance in print in 1681, it was again put on the index of books prohibited by the papacy – where it still remains today!

Such was the mystery surrounding John that various legends about him later grew up. There were tales that he wasn't Irish at all but from the east, a lone traveller to the far west in search of wisdom. There were stories that he went to Athens to study Greek, Arabic and "Chaldaean". In Paris, he was claimed as a founder of the Sorbonne, while in England the tale circulated that he had set up the University of Oxford at the personal invitation of Alfred the Great; a carving of John's head still looks over the entrance to Brasenose College hall! Most extraordinary was the 12th-century legend that he came to England at the end of his career and was murdered by his enraged pupils with their styluses, supposedly at Malmesbury in Wiltshire, where his tomb was long afterwards pointed out. His crime? "He forced them to think"!

As for the real John, neither the year of his birth nor the year of his death are recorded; perhaps he died around 877. We don't know what he looked like, though his imagined face has appeared on the Irish five-pound note. Still a man of mystery, then. I've long wanted to make a film about him. There are many people in history one may admire, but John one can't help but *like*.

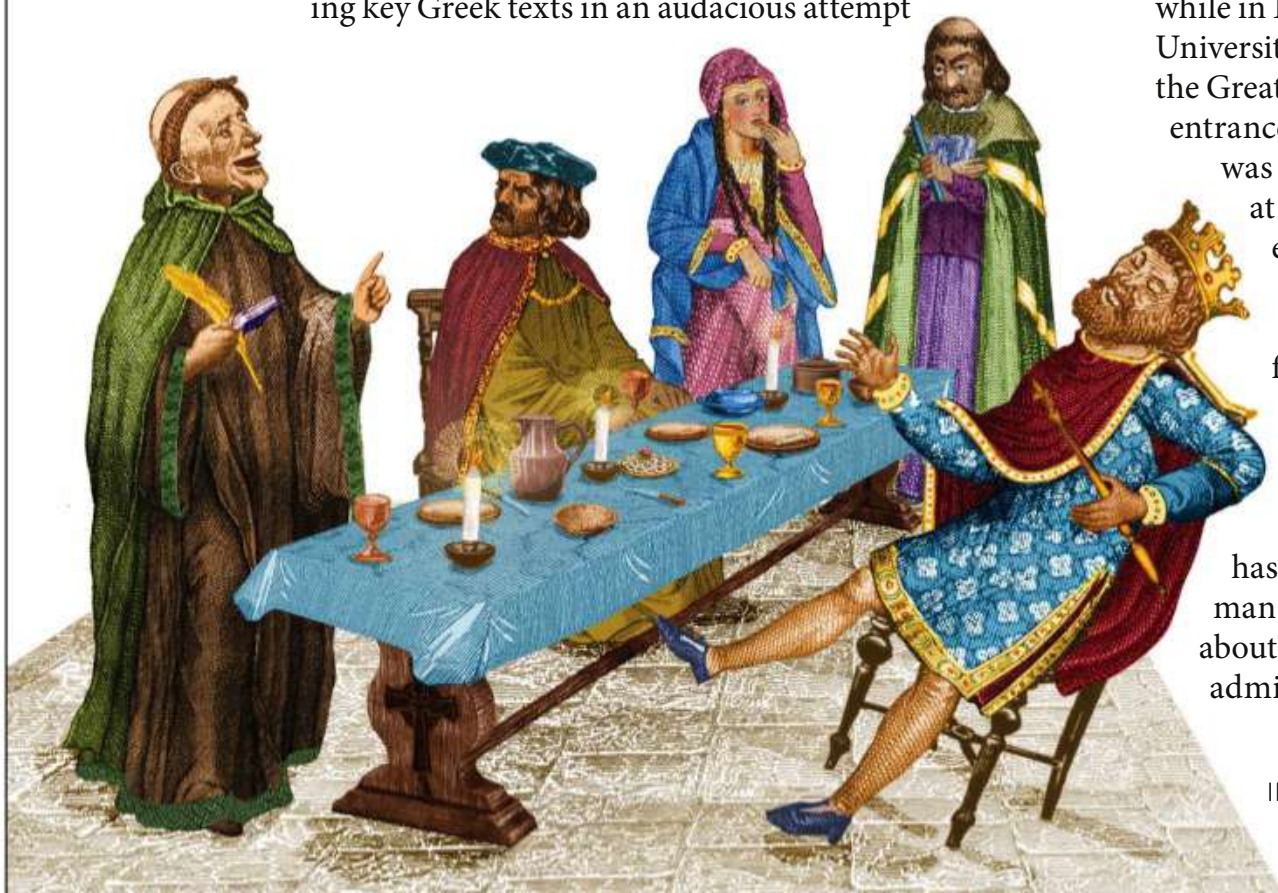


ILLUSTRATION BY **FEMKE DE JONG**

Michael Wood is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. He has presented numerous BBC series, and his most recent book is an updated version of *In Search of the Dark Ages* (BBC, 2022). His Twitter handle is @mayavision

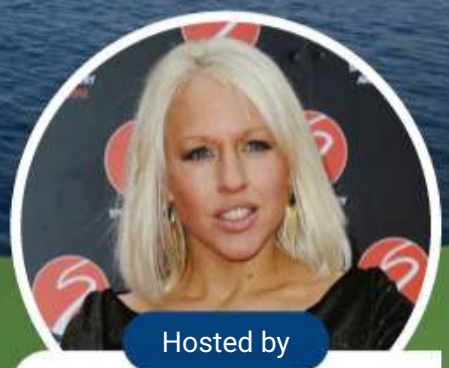
PRINCESS®

Sports Stars

MARTIN JOHNSON

PHIL TUFNELL

SIR STEVE REDGRAVE



Hosted by

GAIL EMMS

7 night Spain & France cruise

Enchanted Princess

SAILS FROM SOUTHAMPTON ON 5 AUGUST 2022

VIEW OUR ALL-INCLUSIVE SPORTS CRUISE

To find out more visit **princess.com**

ANNIVERSARIES

HELEN CARR highlights events that took place in August in history

8 AUGUST 1942

Mahatma Gandhi launches the Quit India Movement

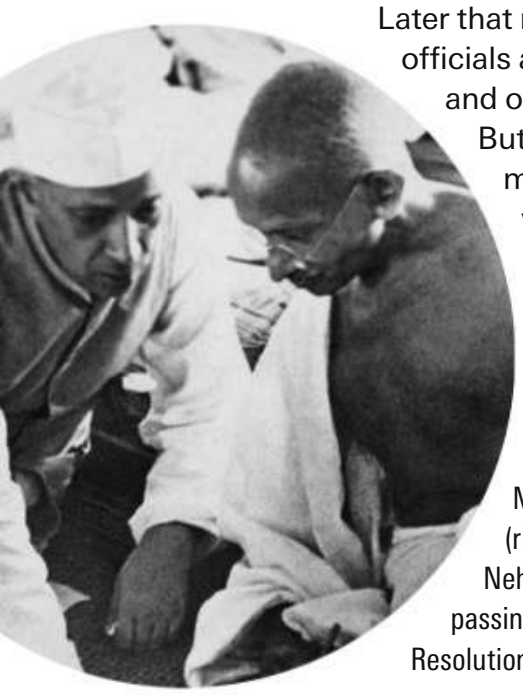
His "Do or Die" speech inspires a nation to end British rule

Shortly before midnight on 8 August 1942, the Indian lawyer, activist and international figurehead Mahatma Gandhi stood before as many as 100,000 people to deliver the most famous speech in his nation's history. As a leader of the Indian National Congress (INC), he called for an end to British rule by launching a protest movement of widespread civil disobedience – to be done peacefully under the principle of "ahimsa" (non-violence).

The catalyst for the Quit India Movement was the outbreak of the Second World War. Without consulting Indian officials, Britain had made the decision that India, as part of the empire, was also at war – a move opposed by Gandhi. He seized the moment to strike back with his address to the All India Congress Committee at Gowalia Tank Maidan park in Bombay (Mumbai), now known as August Revolution Ground.

"The mantra is: Do or Die," he declared in his speech, orated first in Hindi and then again in English."We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of slavery."

Later that night, British officials arrested Gandhi and other INC leaders. But he had already made waves that would result in India's independence five years later.



Mahatma Gandhi (right) with Jawaharlal Nehru shortly before passing the Quit India Resolution in 1942

ALAMY/AKG/ BRIDGEMAN

The American miner George Carmack, who helped spark the Klondike gold rush

16 AUGUST 1896

While prospecting in the Yukon territory of Canada, miner **George Carmack and his brother-in-law Skookum Jim Mason strike gold,** launching the Klondike gold rush.

The armies of Edward III of England and Philip VI of France do battle at Crécy, in an illustration from a chronicle by the 14th-century historian Jean Froissart

26 AUGUST 1346

English longbows humble the French at Crécy

The decisive victory is a landmark moment in the Hundred Years' War

On 26 August 1346, thousands of English and French troops lined up against one another near the town of Crécy-en-Ponthieu in the north-eastern corner of France. Ahead of them lay one of the most famous battles of the Hundred Years' War – that protracted contest for the throne of France – and, on the face of it, there could only be one winner.

The French king Philip VI was feeling mightily confident that morning as his troops readied themselves for battle. And with good reason. Philip boasted the larger army and had at his disposal thousands of mounted knights that had dominated European war for centuries.

The English army consisted mainly of footsoldiers. Led by Edward III, they had landed in Normandy in July and plundered and razed every town in their way. Now, with the French in hot pursuit, they set up a defensive position and waited.

According to contemporary chronicler Jean le Bel, Philip VI was seen in the vicinity around noon and immediately ordered an attack of mercenary crossbowmen hired from Genoa. But the English and Welsh troops had the superior technology, the longbow, which allowed them to shoot at a much higher rate than crossbows and over a longer distance. The Genoese, who had left their shields behind, were routed.

French warhorses now hurled towards the English line, but many were felled by further volleys of arrows. The knights who got through were cut down in a melee. By the time the sun was setting there had been more than a dozen French waves, and their forces had been almost entirely annihilated.

It was not until the following morning that the English army knew they had won the battle of Crécy: a clash that, for a short while at least, left the French at Edward's mercy.

An illustration showing Aztecs clashing with Spanish conquistadors

13 AUGUST 1521

Aided by European diseases and indigenous allies, Spanish conquistador **Hernán Cortés captures the city of Tenochtitlan** after a 93-day siege. This signals the downfall of the Aztec empire and the conquest of Mexico.

Three suspects are led with blankets over their heads into Linslade Courthouse, Buckinghamshire, in August 1963, following the Great Train Robbery

8 AUGUST 1963

The "Great Train Robbers" steal £2.6m

The heist is hailed as the "crime of the century"

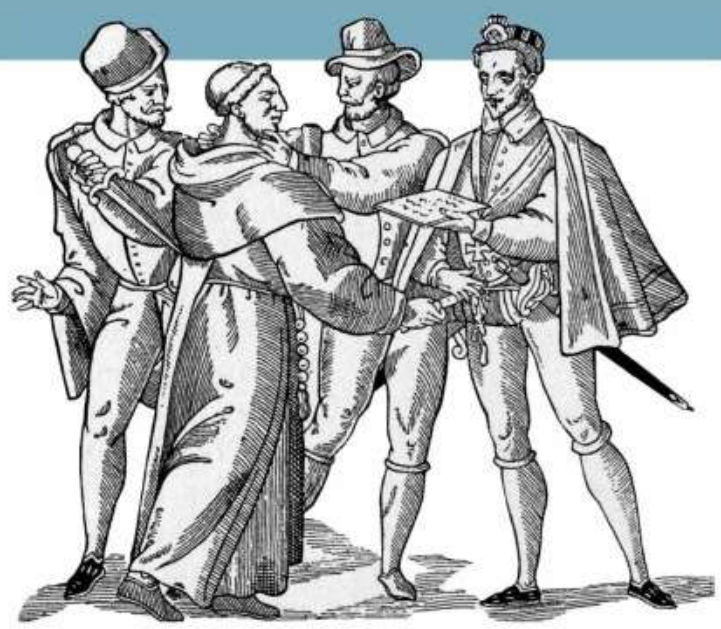
Before sunrise on 8 August 1963, a gang of 15 armed criminals boarded an overnight Royal Mail train at Ledburn in Buckinghamshire and performed one of the 20th century's most daring heists: the Great Train Robbery. The ringleader was Bruce Reynolds, who had come into possession of some intriguing information leaked by an insider at Royal Mail. This train, he was told, would be carrying a vast amount of cash from Glasgow to London. Over a few months, Reynolds and his gang had hatched a careful plan to intercept the train en route and relieve it of its valuable cargo.

The robbery got under way at around 3am, when the train driver, Jack Mills, had to stop the train at a red signal at a spot on the West Coast Main Line called Sears Crossing. Little did he know that the signal had been tampered with. A second member of the crew hopped off the train and found that the cables of the track-side telephone were cut. Before he could sound the alarm, he was attacked. Gang members then overcame Mills, beating him over the head with a cosh. He would never recover from his injuries.

This violence proved counterproductive, for now it was left to a delirious Mills to drive the train to the location where the money could be unloaded: Bridego Bridge. There, while the rest of the Royal Mail staff were handcuffed, the gang emptied the "high value packages" carriage of 120 sacks of cash. They then fled in three vehicles – two with the same registration to fool witnesses – with around £2.6m (some £55m today).

The robbery became headline news and, with a hefty reward on offer, the police were soon tipped off that a suspicious group had been spotted at nearby Leatherslade Farm. The getaway vehicles were found, as were post sacks and fingerprints. Several arrests were made that year, but little of the money was ever recovered and the manhunt for the rest of the gang became global, with investigations reaching Germany and Brazil. Reynolds was caught in 1968; Ronnie Biggs, one of those initially arrested, escaped in 1965 and was only reapprehended in 2001.

SHUTTERSTOCK/TOPFOTO



A contemporary woodcut of the assassination of Henry III of France (far right) by the Catholic friar Jacques Clément

ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES

1 AUGUST 1589

Henry III suffers a fatal knife attack

A religious fanatic assassinates the last Valois king of France

The Wars of Religion raged in France throughout King Henry III's reign, dividing the people between Catholics and Huguenots (Protestants), threatening royal authority – and leading to a brutal attack on Henry on 1 August 1589.

In 1576, a year after his coronation, Henry had signed the Edict of Beaulieu, granting concessions to the Huguenots – such as the right to worship freely in public – and, in the process, making many Catholic enemies. In response, the powerful Henry I, Duke of Guise formed the Catholic League to drive Protestantism out of France. Civil war raged for years, and Henry was forced to flee Paris and join forces with the Calvinist Henry of Navarre.

It was at the small town of Saint-Cloud, while planning to besiege the capital, that the king received a messenger claiming to carry important documents. In fact, it was a Dominican friar named Jacques Clément, who had long planned to assassinate the monarch. After handing over various papers, Clément said he had another, confidential message to deliver.

Leaning forward as if to whisper in the king's ear, Clément drew a dagger from his cloak and stabbed Henry in the abdomen, before himself being killed by the king's guards. The following morning – the day that the king planned to launch his attack on Paris – Henry succumbed to his injuries. H

Helen Carr is a historian and writer. Her latest book is *The Red Prince* (Oneworld, 2021)

250 YEARS AGO

The First Partition of Poland: when three European powers carved up a commonwealth

BY **JANET M HARTLEY**

When was the First Partition of Poland and why did it take place?
The First Partition was in September 1772. Russia was at war with the Ottoman empire and made such large territorial gains in the northern Balkans that it started to alarm Austria. Frederick II of Prussia suggested to Catherine the Great that – in order to preserve a balance of power between Russia, Prussia and Austria – lands should be taken from the Poland-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Formed in 1569, the Commonwealth had become one of the largest states in Europe by the 17th century. The partition saw the three powers seize a third of its lands.

How did the people of the Commonwealth react to the partition?
It was an enormous shock to the educated classes and forced them to attempt to modernise the remaining part of the country. On 3 May 1791, a new constitution replaced the elective monarchy – which had allowed foreign interference at every regime change – with a hereditary one, as well as creating modern structures of government and extending political rights to the urban population. It was one of the first modern written constitutions in the world.

How was Polish land further divided in the subsequent years?
The three powers feared that modernisation could make Poland more independent and, in Catherine's view, the new constitution was influenced by the dangerous ideas of the French Revolution. Invasion of Polish territory by Russian and Prussian forces, a Polish revolt, and further partitions – in 1793 and 1795 – followed. As a result, Poland-Lithuania disappeared from the map.

Why should the First Partition of Poland be remembered?
These were some of the most cynical acts of power politics in the 18th century: great powers believing they had the right to dismember a state in their own interests, disregarding not only the will of the king and parliament of Poland-Lithuania, but the ethnic and religious composition of their new subjects. What is significant, however, is its long-term failure. The partitions created a constant source of instability between the three powers now sharing common borders.

Above all, we should remember the partitions because they served to strengthen national identity. Polish forces joined Napoleon in the 1812 invasion of Russia and there were major revolts against Russian rule in 1830 and 1863. The 3 May Constitution, which led to the dismemberment of the state, became a symbol of the Polish struggle for independence. What's more, 3 May became a national holiday in Poland after independence in 1918, and has been celebrated in Lithuania since 2007. H

A 1773 allegorical engraving of the three powers partitioning Poland. The Polish king (second from left) struggles to keep hold of his crown

Janet M Hartley is emeritus professor of international history at LSE. She is author of *The Volga* (Yale, 2021)

HISTORY EXTRA
PODCAST

Best
Specialist
Podcast

THE PUBLISHER PODCAST AWARDS
POWERED BY dax

Voices of the past

The HistoryExtra podcast, from *BBC History Magazine,* is released up to seven times a week and has recently topped 150 million downloads. It features interviews with world-leading experts on topics spanning ancient history through to the world wars and beyond. Why not check it out today, and explore our archive of over 1,000 previous episodes?

Download episodes for free from **iTunes** and other providers, or via **historyextra.com/podcast**

HIDDEN HISTORIES

KAVITA PURI explores lesser-known stories from our past

"There are other medieval women who we can bring to the foreground"

I'm ashamed to say that, until now, I have never once thought of the women who embroidered the Bayeux Tapestry: who they were, what their lives were like, or how it simply would not exist without their skill and creativity. We might, perhaps, never know much about their stories, but there are other women from the Middle Ages we can learn about and bring into the foreground. Indeed, in her forthcoming book *Femina: A New History of the Middle Ages through the Women Written Out of It* (WH Allen), Oxford lecturer Janina Ramirez shifts the focus on the Middle Ages, adjusting the frame to the female, rather than male, characters.

Hildegard, for instance, was a 12th-century nun from Rhineland who wrote theological works, two scientific treatises, and the first morality play; she also composed music and even invented her own language. Margery Kempe, from late 14th-century Bishop's Lynn (now King's Lynn), was an ordinary married woman, and mother to at least 14 children, who wrote what is believed to be the first English autobiography.

Women talk about things we do not often hear about when we think of the Middle Ages: the fear and pain of childbirth, not desiring their husbands, and herbal remedies for abortion. A handful left written records, and we must try and piece together their lives from fragments of evidence. One of the many fascinating elements of Ramirez's excellent book is the way in which modern technology is allowing us to reassess the past. A Viking grave at Birka in Sweden, where there had been a settlement from 750 to 950 AD, has recently revealed new secrets thanks to research at Stockholm University. One burial included an axe, a quiver of arrows, spears and a sword, as well as gaming pieces, which were used to allow social bonding and encourage diplomacy. For two centuries, archaeologists assumed the bones to be male because of the "masculine" objects. Yet the new research disputed that. Across every sample, the pattern was the same: two X chromosones. This was a female skeleton. The discovery raised the possibility, which has since been much debated, that this could have been an early Viking female warrior.

Thousands of Viking graves have been dug up in the past 200 years, and labelled male or female depending on the objects found alongside the bones. But because of the Birka find, historians are returning to the evidence. More bones are being analysed, and a more nuanced discussion about the role of Viking women is starting to evolve.

New technology has also shaped our understanding of medieval London. During the mid-1980s, 20,000 square metres of burial was uncovered in a site near the Tower of London. It was the first established Black Death cemetery, from which the bones of 634 people were excavated. Nearly 40 years later, Dr Rebecca Redfern from the Museum of London and Dr Joseph Hefner from Michigan State University examined the bones of 41 of the people using an array of methods, including forensic analysis, facial measurements, ancient DNA genome sequencing and stable isotype analysis – the last of which measures the chemicals laid down over time in teeth and bones.

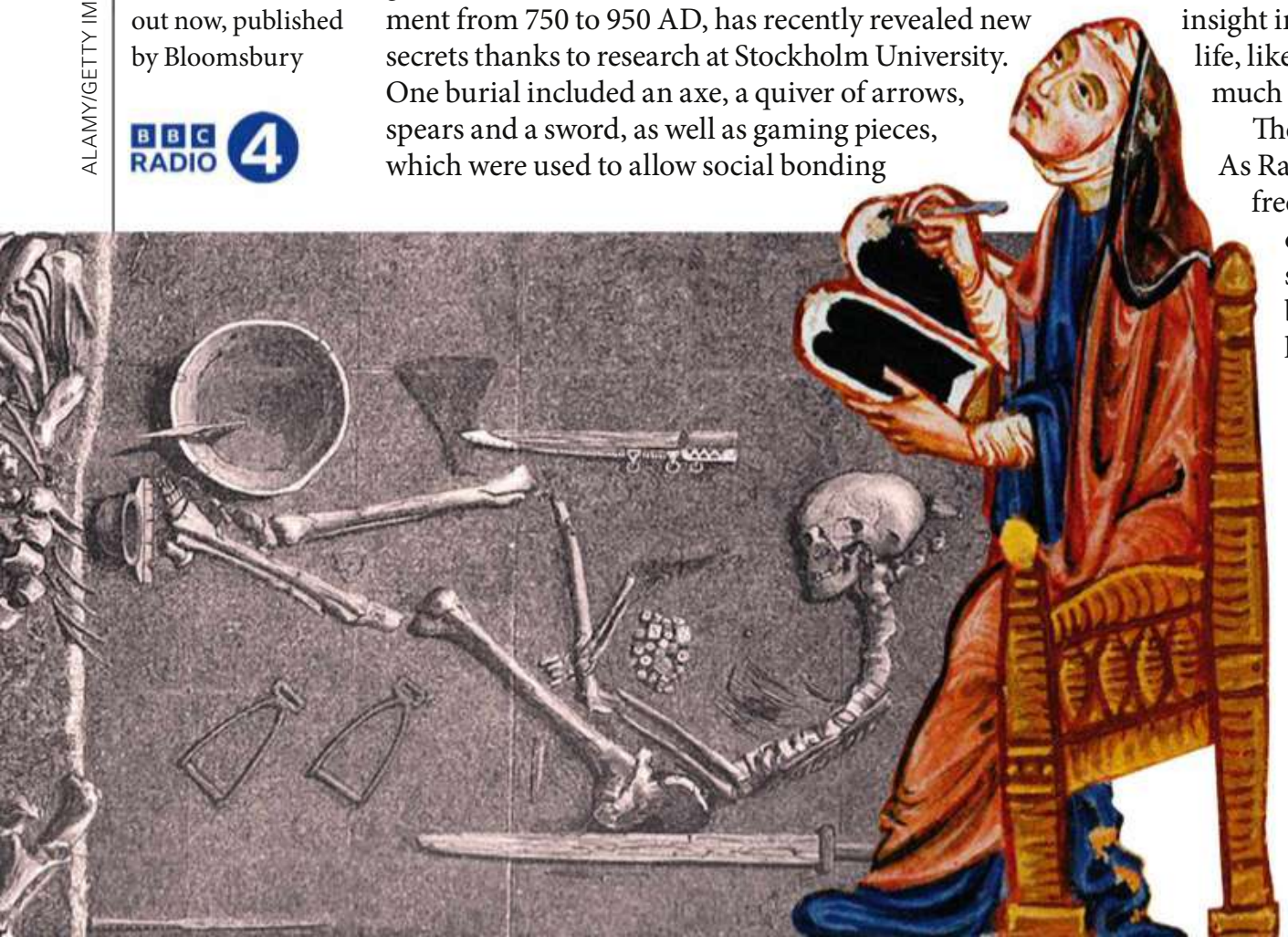
Of the 41 people, 19 were female, and three of these women were of African descent. The skeleton of one of the women of African descent was searched for clues about her life. She was aged between 36 and 45, had osteoarthritis in her spine, and rotator cuff disease to her left shoulder. As Dr Redfern explains, "both conditions could have been caused by manual repetitive labour… it provides an insight into her lived experience, suggesting that her life, like many other women in the period, involved much manual labour."

There are, however, still gaps in our knowledge. As Ramirez puts it, "whether she was enslaved or free, impoverished or wealthy is impossible to determine from the bones alone". We are not sure how this woman ended up in London – but what we *do* know is that, thanks to the latest technology, evidence shows that women of African descent were part of the make-up of medieval London.

Recent finds like these are making us re-evaluate the Middle Ages, ask questions, reassess the evidence that exists, and write back into the story people who have so often been overlooked. H

Kavita Puri is a journalist, author and BBC broadcaster. A new version of her book *Partition Voices: Untold British Stories* is out now, published by Bloomsbury

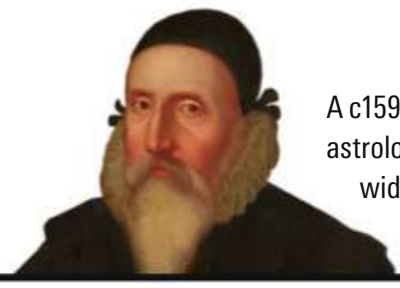
BBC RADIO 4



ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES

The grave of a woman who may have been a Viking warrior unearthed in Birka, Sweden and (right) 12th-century polymath Hildegard. New research is revealing clues about the lives of medieval women

LETTERS



A c1594 portrait of John Dee. The astrologer's court role points to widespread magical belief, says reader Juliet O'Brien

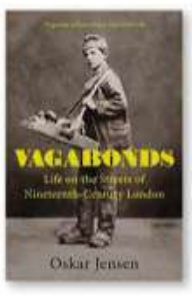
LETTER OF THE MONTH

Hope in history

I enjoy reading your *Letters* pages, and Jill Stewart-Rattray's contribution in June's edition caught my particular attention. She wrote that "should some worthy academic decide to compile a history of the world excluding all mention of our inhumanity towards each other, it would result in a very slender volume".

I have good news for Jill: there is such a book, and I'm happy to say it is not a slender read. Entitled *Humankind: A Hopeful History*, the volume features historical examples in which members of our species have shown a deep care for one another. Rutger Bregman wrote the book to demonstrate that most humans have always been wonderfully supportive of each other. It is the happiest book. I recommend it to anyone who, like Jill, is looking for an uplifting historical summer read, full of examples of human kindness and humour.
Kate Hollis, Bromley

A US paratrooper shares a joke with a resident of the town of Sainte-Mère-Église, 1944. Reader Kate Hollis recommends a book offering an optimistic view of history



We reward the *Letter of the Month* writer with a copy of a new history book. This issue, that is **Vagabonds: Life on the Streets of Nineteenth-century London** by Oskar Jensen. You can read our review of the book on page 78

Monarchy and magic

I was interested to read the examples of superstitious magic in Helen Hackett's feature (*A Journey into the Elizabethan Mind*, June), but expected to see a mention of John Dee, Elizabeth I's astrologer. Dee was consulted about personal and state matters, including the timing of voyages to the New World. Surely this royal patronage helps to show the "top down" effect of superstition as well as common attitudes?
Juliet O'Brien, Farnborough

Transforming surgery

I thoroughly enjoyed the interview with Lindsey Fitzharris in the July issue (*Books Interview*) concerning the work done at Queen Mary's Hospital in Sidcup.

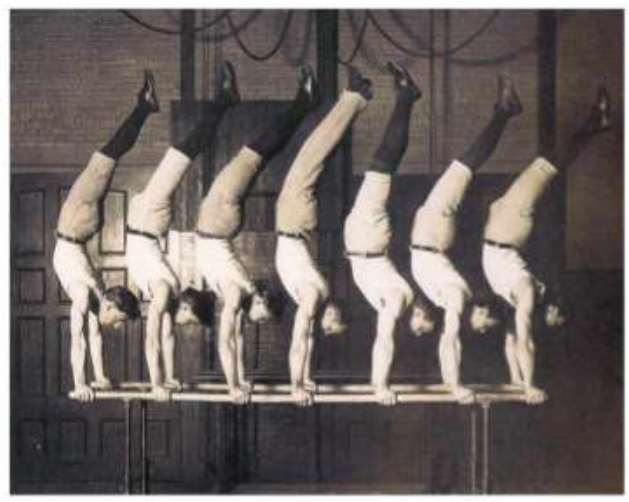
Readers may not realise that performing surgery on the face was particularly challenging at that time, as anaesthesia was conducted using a mask held over the mouth. At the same hospital, two doctors transformed this type of surgery by using rubber tubes inserted into the patient's trachea, enabling a clear surgical field for the surgeon. The doctors were Ivan Magill and Stanley Rowbotham, pioneers in the emerging discipline of anaesthesia, and their lives are celebrated at the Anaesthesia Heritage Centre in Portland Place, London.
Richard Griffiths, consultant anaesthetist, Peterborough and Stamford hospitals

Olympian feats

Peter Murray's story about the rallying reverend [John Hartley, who won Wimbledon in 1879 and 1880 and served as a North Yorkshire vicar for more than 40 years] in July's *Letters* reminded me of some other remarkable sporting achievements.

Andarin Carvajal competed in the men's marathon at the 1904 St Louis Olympics in ordinary clothes because he didn't have any shorts. He hadn't eaten for 40 hours before the event, ate some rotten apples from a roadside orchard during the race and fell ill – but still finished fourth. At the same Olympics, gymnast George Eyser won six medals all in one day, despite having a wooden leg after being run over by a train.

Henry Pearce of Australia was competing in the quarter-finals of the single sculls rowing event at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics when a line of ducks swam across the water in front of him. Henry stopped to let them pass before carrying on to win the race with 9.8 seconds to spare. He won the gold medal that year and again in LA in 1932.
Ian MacDonald, Essex



George Eyser (centre), whose gymnastic feats at the 1904 Olympics are celebrated by reader Ian MacDonald

Social engineering

I was intrigued by the suggestion in your article on [pioneering marine engineer] Victoria Drummond (*Amazing Lives*, May) that she achieved all she did without patronage. I am in awe of her determination against the horrendous level of discrimination prevalent at the time. However, you quote Drummond, goddaughter of Queen Victoria and born into privilege at Megginch Castle, as saying: "Mummy got me an introduction to the manager of the Caledon Ship Works in Dundee." Is it not somewhat overstating the case to suggest there was no patronage?
Carrie Elliott, Colchester

An overlooked siege

I was surprised that you made no reference in the timeline to Jessie Childs' feature [on the siege of Basing House, in the June issue] to the 1648 Siege of Colchester. The New Model Army's siege of the town and the royalist forces trapped inside ran for 77 days, and caused huge damage to the town by bombardment as well as starvation of the unfortunate populace.

With Cromwell's victory at the battle of Preston on 19 August 1648, it became obvious that there would be no raising of the siege by royalist forces, and Colchester's defenders finally surrendered on 28 August under very harsh terms. Two commanders, George Lisle and Charles Lucas, were immediately executed, while ordinary soldiers were shipped off to work in plantations in the Caribbean. Clearly parliament wanted to end once and for all the dissembling of King Charles and the threat of more royalist violence, and within five months Charles I would be executed.

The battle for Basing House was important but, compared to this defining moment, it really was a sideshow in the civil war.
Jonathan Pearsall, Colchester

ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES

Castle Rushen on the Isle of Man, which reader David Killip highlights as the last royalist stronghold to surrender to parliamentarian forces

The last stronghold

Jessie Childs' fascinating feature identifies the surrender of Harlech in March 1647 as the capitulation of the last royalist garrison in the first civil war. I feel I must add to her narrative by reminding readers that the last royalist stronghold to surrender to parliamentarian forces at the conclusion of civil-war hostilities was Castle Rushen at Castletown on the Isle of Man – defended under the leadership of the redoubtable Charlotte, widow of James Stanley, 7th Earl of Derby. It yielded to Colonel Duckenfield in October 1651.
David Killip, Isle of Man

A locomotive legacy

Your article on jubilees (July) brought to mind a legacy of the 1935 jubilee of George V. The LMS Railway Company was bringing into service a new class of passenger locomotives and it was decided that the first of these would be called *Jubilee Class*. The next batch were given the names of the colonies and other territories of the empire. Those remaining were named after admirals and warships.

Nearly 200 of the class were built, and I believe at least two have been restored to working order.
John Gerrard, Glasgow

WRITE TO US

We welcome your letters, while reserving the right to edit them. We may publish your letters on our website. Please include a daytime phone number and, if emailing, a postal address (not for publication). Letters should be no longer than 250 words.
Email: *letters@historyextra.com* **Post:** BBC History Magazine, Immediate Media, Eagle House, Bristol, BS1 4ST

ALAMY

The opinions expressed by our commentators are their own and may not represent the views of *BBC History Magazine* or Immediate Media Company

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

EDITORIAL
Editor Rob Attar *robertattar@historyextra.com*
Deputy editor Matt Elton *mattelton@historyextra.com*
Production editor Spencer Mizen
Section editor Rhiannon Davies
Picture editor Samantha Nott *samnott@historyextra.com*
Art director Susanne Frank
Senior deputy art editor Rachel Dickens
Podcast editor Ellie Cawthorne
Content director Dr David Musgrove
Content strategist Emma Mason
Digital editor Elinor Evans
Digital section editors Rachel Dinning & Kev Lochun

Fact-checkers: Dr Robert Blackmore, John Evans, Dr Fay Glinister, Josette Reeves, Daniel Adamson, Daniel Watkins, Rowena Cockett
Picture consultant: Everett Sharp

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
Advertising manager
Sam Jones 0117 300 8145
Sam.Jones@immediate.co.uk
Senior brand sales executive
Sam Evanson 0117 300 8544
Brand sales executive
Sarah Luscombe 0117 300 8530
Sarah.Luscombe@immediate.co.uk
Group direct marketing manager
Laurence Robertson 00353 5787 57444
Subscriptions director Jacky Perales-Morris
Subscriptions marketing manager
Kevin Slaughter
Direct marketing executive Aisha Babb
US representative Kate Buckley
buckley@buckleypell.com

PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS
PR manager Natasha Lee
Natasha.Lee@immediate.co.uk

SYNDICATION
Director of licensing & syndication Tim Hudson
International partners' manager Anna Brown

HISTORYEXTRA PODCAST
Head of podcasts Ben Youatt
Podcast producer Jack Bateman
Podcast deputy Brittany Collie
Podcast editorial assistant Emily Briffett
Podcast coordinator Emily Thorne
Podcast assistant Daniel Kramer-Arden

PRODUCTION
Production director Sarah Powell
Senior production coordinator Holly Donmall
Ad co-ordinator Lucy Dearn
Ad designer Julia Young

IMMEDIATE MEDIA COMPANY
Commercial director Jemima Dixon
CEO Sean Cornwell
CFO & COO Dan Constanda
Executive chairman Tom Bureau

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE
Founding editor Greg Neale

BBC STUDIOS, UK PUBLISHING
Chair, Editorial Review Boards Nicholas Brett
Managing Director, Consumer Products and Licensing Stephen Davies
Director, Magazines and Consumer Products Mandy Thwaites
Compliance manager Cameron McEwan
(uk.publishing@bbc.com)

IMMEDIATE MEDIA CO

Vol 23 No 8 – August 2022
BBC History Magazine is published by Immediate Media Company London Limited under licence from BBC Studios who help fund new BBC programmes.

BBC History Magazine was established to publish authoritative history, written by leading experts, in an accessible and attractive format. We seek to maintain the high journalistic standards traditionally associated with the BBC.

© Immediate Media Company London Limited, 2022 – ISSN: 1469 8552
Not for resale. All rights reserved. Unauthorised reproduction in whole or part is prohibited without written permission. Every effort has been made to secure permission for copyright material. In the event of any material being used inadvertently, or where it proved impossible to trace the copyright owner, acknowledgement will be made in a future issue. MSS, photographs and artwork are accepted on the basis that *BBC History Magazine* and its agents do not accept liability for loss or damage to same. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the publisher.

We abide by IPSO's rules and regulations. To give feedback about our magazines, please visit immediate.co.uk, email *editorialcomplaints@immediate.co.uk* or write to Katherine Conlon, Immediate Media Co., Vineyard House, 44 Brook Green, London W6 7BT.

Immediate Media Company is working to ensure that all of its paper is sourced from well-managed forests. This magazine can be recycled, for use in newspapers and packaging. Please remove any gifts, samples or wrapping and dispose of it at your local collection point.

recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

ipso Regulated

abc Jan–Dec 2021 **92,687**

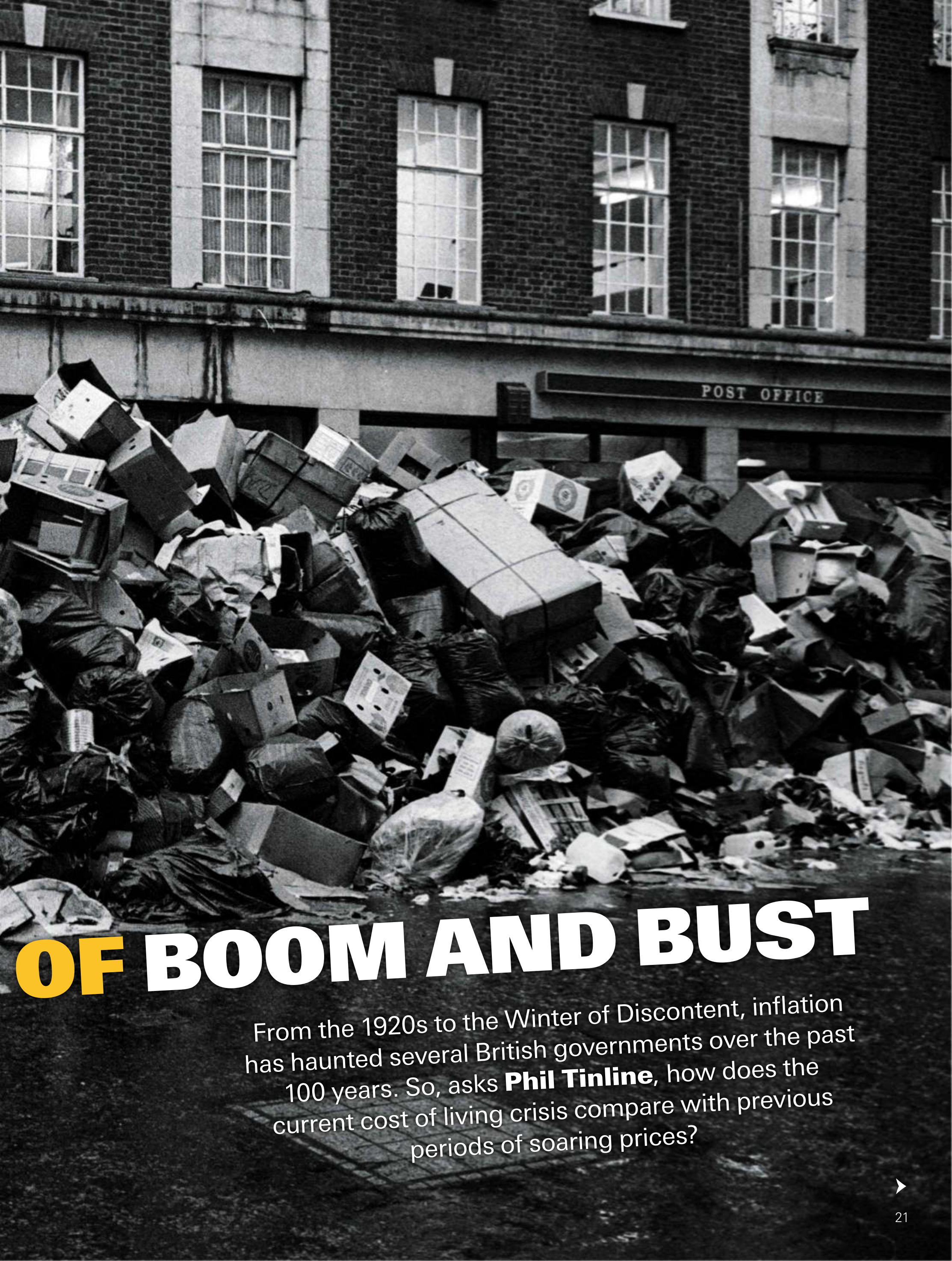
SAVE WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE TODAY

› Page 68

BRITAIN'S CENTURY

Trashing the economy
Rubbish lies uncollected on the streets of London, 1979. Prime Minister James Callaghan's efforts to drive down inflation triggered a wave of strikes that helped eject him from power

ALAMY



OF BOOM AND BUST

From the 1920s to the Winter of Discontent, inflation has haunted several British governments over the past 100 years. So, asks **Phil Tinline**, how does the current cost of living crisis compare with previous periods of soaring prices?

Energy prices are rocketing. Other costs of living are soaring too. For the first time in decades, inflation is a pressing political issue. This has prompted suggestions that Britain is "going back to the 1970s".

But *is* it? What does that dread phrase actually signify? To find out, we need to look further back, to trace the political impact of inflation – and the fear of inflation – since the advent of British mass democracy.

Just over 100 years ago, industrial workers came home from the First World War, expecting their sacrifices to be rewarded. For the first time, all working men now had the vote. The prime minister, David Lloyd George, maintained high taxes into peacetime, promising "homes fit for heroes".

Meanwhile, as pent-up demand for long-unavailable goods was suddenly unleashed, the economy boomed. Prices in 1920 were up 250 per cent on those in 1913. Newly powerful trade unions led successful strikes to ensure workers' pay was kept abreast with inflation. Even the Liverpool police went on strike – and Lloyd George intervened to secure their raise.

The thriller-writer E Phillips Oppenheim was aghast. In October 1919, he complained in the *Daily Mail* that "Labour today has only to open its mouth and it receives practically what it asks for." Meanwhile, professionals such as himself, groaning under high taxes and rising prices, could not recover their prewar lifestyles. He complained: "My chauffeur, content with 30s a week before the war, now demands a weekly wage of £3 16s."

This grievance triggered a flood of readers' letters. Clerks, civil servants, vicars and pensioners were scraping and saving to keep up appearances, living in dread of the unpayable bill. The *Mail* dubbed this "vast, silent and increasing section of the community" the "New Poor", who could only watch as small businesses hiked their prices to ride high customer demand. Butchers (butchers!) were "buying motor-cars – not chiefly for business but for jaunting", while impoverished doctors resorted to push-bikes. One housewife, going "shabby in order to keep the children nice", wailed: "What is the way out?"

Part of the problem, the *Mail* argued, was an extravagant government borrowing too much. The manufacture of paper money was "one of our most active industries".

In March 1919, a Middle Classes Union had been founded to fight back. Then, in 1921, the joint owner of the *Mail*, Lord Rothermere, backed the creation of an Anti-Waste League, which soon started winning by-elections.

Bundles of cash
Money is stacked from floor to ceiling in a Berlin bank. In 1923, hyperinflation sparked an economic crisis in Germany, assisting the early advance of the Nazis

This was not a backlash confined to the right. Labour's economics expert, Philip Snowden, warned his working-class followers that inflation "works in a vicious circle". The more money there was in circulation, the less it was worth; as prices and wages rose, yet more money was needed. Government borrowing threatened "national bankruptcy".

This nightmare had to be stopped before it was too late. The 1920 budget hiked interest rates to 7 per cent. This encouraged people to save rather than spend – reducing demand and so reducing the drive to inflate prices. The chancellor went on to cut income tax and set about slashing government expenditure. Dodging one nightmare, however, led straight to another: mass unemployment. Squeezing demand out of the economy may lower demand for goods, but it also lowers demand for workers to make those goods.

Hyperinflation divided one section of society from another, undermining faith in democracy

By June 1921, 2 million were out of work. On armistice day, jobless veterans laid a wreath bearing a pointed dedication: "From the living victims – the unemployed – to our dead comrades who died in vain." But unemployment was seen as a price worth paying, not least by those who didn't pay it.

In 1923, this decision seemed vindicated by events in Germany, where Snowden's vicious circle was whirring. On 19 June, the *Telegraph* yelled: "MARK'S RECORD PLUNGE – 660,000 FOR £1 – GERMANS' DESPERATION." By August, it was reporting political strikes, food riots and "convulsive turning off and turning on of trams, water, gas, electricity, potatoes, butter, newspapers, money", while the ordinary Berliner "reels in stupefaction and feels that the foundations of the world are crumbling away under his feet". Hyperinflation divided one section of society from another, erasing savings and undermining faith in democracy.

Yet when the Great Depression struck, British politicians' certainty that inflation was the overriding nightmare was sorely

GETTY IMAGES

The cost of war
Members of the "Camberwell Organised Unemployed" – some wearing pawn tickets behind their war medals – lay a wreath on armistice day, 1921. The battle to ease inflation in the early 1920s cost hundreds of thousands their jobs

tested. In 1931, unemployment rose towards 3 million. The Labour government had to borrow more and more to fund the dole. To do that, Snowden – by then chancellor of the Exchequer – had to win bankers' confidence, which meant cutting unemployment benefit, hurting the poorest of Labour's own supporters. But Snowden believed that if he did not balance the books it would destroy confidence in the pound and trigger a German-style whirlpool of inflation.

In desperation, Snowden and prime minister Ramsay MacDonald broke from Labour and formed a coalition with the Conservatives and Liberals to push through the cuts. During the hyperinflation of 1923, MacDonald had witnessed German factory workers being paid in heaps of almost-worthless banknotes. Now, to justify his cuts and their impact on already-hungry families, he took to waving a 50,000,000,000 mark note – which, he told audiences, had been worth just tuppence.

War economy

Meanwhile in Germany, unemployment hit 6 million and Hitler took power, promising to get rid of the problem. It was the threat of Nazi attack, and the desperate need to rearm, that finally overrode the British government's inflation nightmare. As borrowing and spending rose, so did inflation – but, following the outbreak of the Second World War, it was simply a problem for the state to manage under wartime powers.

The firing line
Michael Foot, pictured in 1945. During the Second World War, he excoriated the governments of the 1930s for their caution in spending on rearmament

To many, this about-face came terrifyingly late. In June 1940, in the wake of the near-disaster at Dunkirk, the fiery young journalist Michael Foot co-wrote a book called *Guilty Men* in four days flat, lambasting the Conservative-dominated governments of the 1930s for rearming too slowly. Why, he demanded, had those old taboos not been smashed before? And if the state could now borrow to fight the Nazis, why had it not borrowed to fight unemployment?

Eventually, as victory drew near, Mass Observation asked what the public expected to happen afterwards – and found that many feared a repeat of what had followed the last war. Older people remembered the years after 1918 "only too well, with its high hopes and broken promises, its enormous unemployment figures and its 'war heroes' selling matches or singing in the streets". A 35-year-old draughtsman from Sheffield spoke for many when he warned: "I don't think people will stand for it this time."

Once again, peace brought surging demand and inflation. But there was to be no return to the interwar years. This time, instead of letting mass unemployment drive

GETTY IMAGES

INFLATION: A ROLLERCOASTER RIDE

Inflation rates since 1920, shown as yearly averages

Workers stack shells into piles. Rapid rearmament saw inflation surge to 16.8 per cent in 1940

A London garage closed for business in 1973. Inflation hit unprecedented highs in the wake of that year's "oil shock"

1920 15.4%
Amid a **postwar boom**, inflation soars. But within a year, after deep government cuts and a **sharp rise in interest rates**, prices *shrink* by 8.6 per cent. Inflation doesn't return for years, while **unemployment** remains above a million until 1940.

1931 -4.3%
The National Government **cuts unemployment benefit** to restore confidence in the pound and keep it pegged to gold. When the cuts themselves provoke a new panic, the pound is forced off the gold standard after all. Mild inflation returns – and aids economic recovery.

1939 2.8%
The cost of rearmament helps push inflation to 2.8 per cent, but the government keeps borrowing and spending. By 1940, the rate is 16.8 percent.

1948 7.7%
With peacetime inflation reaching 7 per cent, the Labour government introduces **incomes policy**. These help Conservative and Labour governments keep inflation down without mass unemployment.

1969 5.4%
Inflation passes 5 per cent – and doesn't fall below that level again until 1983. Many blame **high pay claims and low productivity**.

0%

SOURCES: ONS, HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY RESEARCH PAPER 03/82; FIGURES ARE RPI FROM 1948.
*FINAL ENTRY IS THE RPI FIGURE FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO OCTOBER 2021

down wages, the Labour government cajoled the unions to agree an "incomes policy", holding pay rises below inflation. In return, the government asked companies to hold down prices. By October 1948, chancellor Stafford Cripps could boast: "Quite a lot of wise folk thought it was pretty hopeless to ask people to do those sorts of things voluntarily – well, they were wrong!"

The unions had emerged from the war stronger than ever but broadly accepted this approach for two decades, helped by an astonishingly long period of postwar growth. Only in the mid-1960s did it start to come apart, as productivity stalled and younger, less-deferential trade unionists turned against incomes policy.

Policy-busting rise

In 1970, Conservative leader Edward Heath won power with promises to make inflation his government's top priority. But when unemployment hit a million, he U-turned and launched a dash for growth. Then in October 1973, with inflation cresting 9 per cent, Arab petroleum-producing countries imposed an oil embargo, and prices rocketed. The miners saw their chance, and struck for an incomes policy-busting pay rise. Heath called an election – and lost. Labour gave the miners their raise, but found annual inflation heading for 25 per cent.

For the first time since 1919, the pressure of rising prices started to transform British politics. The cost of bread was an urgent election issue, and Shirley Williams became secretary of state for "Prices and Consumer Protection". But politicians seemed unable to control the unions and ease inflation.

As in 1919, an angry, frightened middle class began to organise. When a retired general called for public action to face down the unions, he received a torrent of letters from volunteers. The journalist Patrick Hutber wrote a book called *The Decline and Fall of the Middle Class – and How it Can Fight Back*, insisting that "if inflation continues unchecked", the middle class "will be destroyed". On 5 September 1974, leading Conservative Sir Keith Joseph argued that it was time to abandon fears of returning to the mass unemployment of the 1930s. Inflation was the more pressing nightmare, "threatening to destroy our society". The British should not assume they were "immune to the processes of despair and disintegration which ultimately invite dictatorship".

The Labour government gave the miners their raise, but found annual inflation heading for 25 per cent

To press this case, he invoked interwar German hyperinflation. In the years after 1945, the likes of Michael Foot had blamed the advent of Nazi rule on Germany's early 1930s mass unemployment. But now, Hitler's rise was pinned on the events of 1923, with frightening implications for high-inflation mid-1970s Britain. When a book appeared called *When Money Dies: The Nightmare of the Weimar Hyperinflation*, *The Times* suggested that prime minister Harold Wilson should put copies "beside every bed at Chequers".

For several years Labour managed to hold all this at bay with yet another anti-inflation

GETTY IMAGES

1975 24.2%
In August, in the wake of the Heath government's reflation and the **1973 "oil shock"**, inflation pushes towards 25 per cent.

Supermarket shelves lie empty during a strike by lorry workers in the "Winter of Discontent"

Protesters urge the government to help elderly people with their energy bills, Downing Street, 2022

1978 8.3%
With inflation still over 8 per cent, after years of incomes policy, the government **imposes a new 5 per cent pay limit** – triggering the "Winter of Discontent".

1990 9.5%
In August, following Conservative chancellor Nigel Lawson's **tax-cutting boom**, inflation touches double figures. But when **recession** bites, it falls below 5 per cent again.

2009 -0.5%
After the financial crash, prices fall to -0.5 per cent. Instead of mass unemployment, the crisis is absorbed by **workers taking pay cuts**, or moving to precarious **"gig economy" jobs**.

October 2021* 6%
In October, as **energy prices soar**, inflation reaches 6 per cent for the first time since April 1991.

Labour's Shirley Williams focuses on inflation in October 1974. In that year's elections, the price of bread became an urgent issue

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

incomes policy. And for many unionised workers, the mid-1970s meant rising real wages: they could buy their first colour TV and holiday in Spain. But with unemployment rising as well as prices, prime minister James Callaghan became increasingly focused on driving down inflation. Finally, in the "Winter of Discontent" of 1978–79, patience with years of incomes policy wore out. Car workers, lorry drivers and, finally, low-paid hospital staff and grave-diggers went on strike for higher pay. Labour lost power to Margaret Thatcher and Keith Joseph.

Unions disempowered

In one sense, the events of 1978–79 brought the unions what they wanted: the new government rejected incomes policy. But alongside new laws restricting unions' ability to strike effectively, inflation was brought under control by letting unemployment climb to heights not seen since the 1930s. The time to which Britain must never return was no longer the 1930s, but the 1970s.

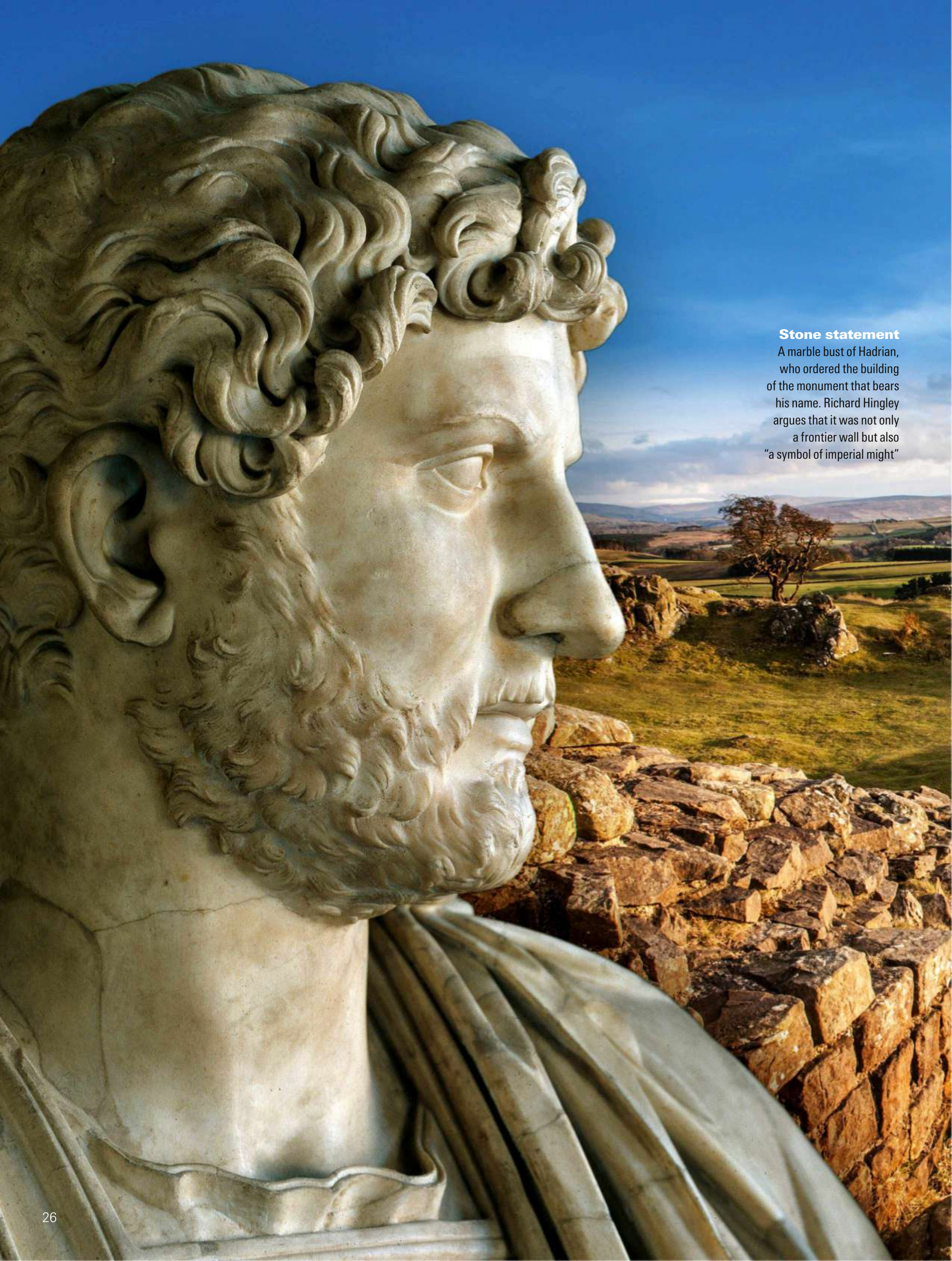
So – are we now doing exactly that? Today's energy supply shortages are in some ways similar to the 1973 oil shock. And, as in the 1970s, there's a lot of money sloshing through the economy. One huge difference today, though, is that most private-sector workers are not in trade unions, and there is far less organised pressure to push up wages than in the 1970s. Since the 2008 crash, pay has largely flatlined; wages are rising, but more slowly than prices. The idea that we are "going back to the 1970s" seems less a useful parallel, more an invocation of the nightmare that has long shaped our politics.

Yet history does suggest that the pressure of inflation breaks old taboos. Today, those most affected are not the middle class but struggling, precariously employed workers. It may be that, once again, something will have to give. Perhaps we're watching a new nightmare emerge: of parents having to choose between heating and eating. H

A delivery rider, 2019. Workers today are more likely to be on short-term contracts than their predecessors

Phil Tinline is a writer and leading producer of historical documentaries for BBC Radio 4. His latest book is *The Death of Consensus: 100 Years of British Political Nightmares* (Hurst, 2022)

LISTEN Catch up on Phil Tinline's BBC Radio 4 series **Pay Freezes** on BBC Sounds: *bbc.co.uk/sounds/brand/m001547s*



Stone statement
A marble bust of Hadrian, who ordered the building of the monument that bears his name. Richard Hingley argues that it was not only a frontier wall but also "a symbol of imperial might"

HADRIAN'S WALL SPECIAL

THE ROAD TO HADRIAN'S WALL

From Caesar's first invasion in 55 BC to the construction of the famous barrier some 175 years later, Rome engaged in multiple battles to subdue the peoples of Britain. Archaeologist **Richard Hingley** talks to Rob Attar about how the Romans sought to take control of this distant province

BRIDGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Rob Attar: The journey to the construction of Hadrian's Wall began almost 200 years earlier with the first campaigns of Julius Caesar. What inspired him to launch his expeditions to Britain in 55 and 54 BC?

Richard Hingley: Caesar was already a senior Roman general and politician at this point and he'd spent three years conquering Gaul. To Caesar, Britain was even more remarkable than Gaul because it was almost entirely unknown to the Romans. The islands of Britain had been tied into trade with the continent and we know traders from the Mediterranean in previous decades and centuries had travelled up the Atlantic coast and to Britain. But Britain itself, Caesar wrote, was a mystery to the Romans. The only thing they did know was that the Britons were highly "barbaric", in their own classical terms, lacking urban civilisation.

Caesar also wrote that he was really keen to explore Britain to add to his reputation. One reason for that was that Britain lies in the sea. The Romans inherited a concept about the ocean from the classical Greeks, that the world was an island surrounded by an endless ocean, and the remarkable thing about Britain was that it was set within the waters of this ocean. So Caesar wanted to go to Britain to increase his own status and his image in Rome as somebody who was exploring new lands.

The other thing we're told, by Caesar, is that the Britons had been helping the Gauls to fight him in Gaul itself. He therefore had that twin motivation: exploring, doing something really remarkable; and also punishing people who had been fighting him.

Conquering Gaul was to take eight years so to dream of conquering Britain as well would have been too much for Caesar. I suspect he never had any intention of doing that; he wanted to go there and force the submission of people, which he did. Some of the British people fought him but others submitted willingly and were probably rewarded with gold, silver, pottery and other materials they valued.

There was then a gap of almost a century before Claudius's invasion of AD 43. To what extent were links growing between Britain and the Roman empire during this period?

What Caesar did was to establish a network of people that spanned the Channel and connected Britain to Rome. And these relationships between senior Romans and people in Britain continued for the century between Caesar and Claudius. Gradually, political leaders in Britain took on more and more Roman ways. They were bribed by Rome with gold, silver and wine and high-status pottery and glass, which they used within their own communities, and they stayed in contact with Rome.

> "Britain was almost totally unknown in Rome. The only thing they did know was that the Britons were highly 'barbaric'"

Britain was divided into a large number of peoples at this time, and their leaders were vying with each other for power. This 100 years was really a period in which some leaders in Britain were fighting each other, while Rome was trying to keep control and also maintain the friendly nature of the relationship between these British leaders and Rome.

So what changed in AD 43? Why did Claudius decide to invade?

Claudius came to power in AD 41 and he succeeded a weak, unpopular emperor: Caligula. Claudius also wasn't popular in Rome initially; we hear that he stammered and he wasn't apparently a particularly confident man. The Roman elite were supposed to be good at discourse, appearing in public and presenting a domineering, masculine image. And perhaps Claudius didn't really come across that well to his kin. So he needed some sort of fabulous achievement, and he was either intelligent enough himself or his advisors were bright enough to suggest that Britain might be quite a soft touch.

Claudius wasn't a military man: unlike many of the emperors, he hadn't really undertaken serious military service at all. So he went to Britain because he could make his reputation and he planned his operations very carefully, with a senior commander who actually took all the risks during the invasion period. But it was really Claudius's achievement because he was the emperor and he gave the order that it should happen.

Claudius was only in Britain for a short time. His role is really played up as a military victory but he almost certainly did not actually fight at all. He probably arrived in Britain, marched with some of the Roman army to Colchester, then marched back and returned to Rome. But he did receive the submission of possibly 11 kings in Britain. Quite a large area of south-eastern Britain seems to have effectively just surrendered to Rome when the forces arrived and the way Rome managed this was to leave those people in power.

For the lifetime of these individuals, they remained nominally independent, but Rome could rely on them being loyal and providing troops and supplies for their military.

So a lot of the British peoples made accommodation with Claudius early on. But it's fair to say there was also a good amount of resistance even from the start, wasn't there?

Britain was not a nation. It's not like the "British" fought Rome; some of the British peoples were pro-Roman, but others fought with intent. And when the Romans came into Britain we know they did have to fight, including two battles, probably in what's now Kent, before Claudius even arrived. I tend to think that the dominant peoples in Britain were pro-Roman, while a lot of their enemies were anti-Roman, largely because they were trying to maintain their independence from the dominant kings. The Roman writer Tacitus recorded that "there is nothing that helps us more against such powerful peoples [of Britain] than their disunity".

As the Romans headed further west and north, they got involved in more serious combat. Probably in the first year or two of the conquest, military forces of Rome spread out from the south east. One of the legions went to the south-west, into what is now

Bid for glory
A coin minted in AD 46–47 depicts Emperor Claudius, who saw in the invasion of Britain an opportunity to boost his popularity in Rome

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Art attack
An 18th-century sculpture shows Julius Caesar invading Britain. The Roman general launched two campaigns to Britain, in 55 and 54 BC, in a bid to boost his reputation back home as an explorer of unknown lands

GETTY IMAGES

Freedom fighter
A Victorian statue of Boudicca, flanked by her two daughters. The background image on which it's superimposed shows the Essex coastline near Colchester, one of the towns burned to the ground during the Iceni war leader's rebellion

GETTY IMAGES

Dorset and there they got involved in serious conflict with the inhabitants of that region. And as they got north of London, campaigning in what is now the Midlands, they were also facing quite major opposition.

By the late 40s, Rome had effectively conquered most of south-eastern Britain but as they were getting to what's now the Welsh Marches and to south-western Britain, the opposition became much more substantial. One of the reasons may have been that as they got into the Midlands and further west, the British peoples they encountered didn't appear to have had the same political hierarchies. They still had war leaders but they were not as organised. And Rome found it much more difficult to campaign and conquer peoples who didn't have leaders that had sufficient power to exert territorial control over their areas. Once Rome came across more dispersed peoples with fewer dominant leaders, they started having to fight quite small-scale conflicts. They found it very hard to bring people to battle on the whole, which is how they tended to conquer people.

Entertainment centre By c90 AD, when this amphitheatre at Caerleon was built, the Romans had conquered most of modern-day Wales. Up to 6,000 spectators would gather here to watch gladiatorial displays

Did any of the British opposition actually threaten the Roman conquest of Britain?
The main conflict that threatened Roman control of Britain was the famous rebellion of Boudicca in AD 60 – 17 years after Claudius's forces first come in. Tacitus described this as "a grievous calamity". Boudicca was the partner of one of the "friendly kings", a man called Prasutagus. He may have been one of the 11 who submitted to Claudius in AD 43.

Prasutagus died in AD 60. He wanted to leave territory to his and Boudicca's two daughters, but Tacitus wrote that what he tried to do was not fully legal in Roman terms. He wrote up a will, which split his kingdom – the people of the Iceni – between Nero, who by now was the emperor, and his two daughters. The Roman administration in Britain might well not have accepted this because the rule was really that when a friendly king died their territory would be handed over peacefully to Rome. Something clearly went wrong in this instance, and Tacitus tells us that Boudicca was flogged and her daughters were raped and also that the Romans committed outrages against some of the other elite families of the Iceni. All of this caused a major rupture in Britain.

The classical authors blamed Nero for this, at least to an extent, but Nero was in Rome and this was almost certainly mismanagement by the provincial governor who was off conquering territory in Wales at the time.

A major uprising broke out. Boudicca won a battle at Colchester: her followers burned the colony and killed all the Romans living there, who were largely retired legionary soldiers. They set fire to a new temple to Claudius then they moved on to London, which was the key port in Britain, and they burned the city there and drove the population away. Then they moved to Verulamium (St Albans) and destroyed that too.

At this point, the province was really in trouble. The provincial governor rushed back to try and rectify the situation. Tacitus tells us he had 10,000 soldiers, and that they won this magnificent battle against more than 80,000 Britons. Boudicca's followers were defeated and slaughtered, and their leader also died. Now, Tacitus may have exaggerated but if the Romans really had 10,000 soldiers fighting upwards of 80,000 Britons, then if the Britons had actually managed to organise themselves, the governor would have been defeated. At that stage one of the other two legions in Britain, down at Exeter, had failed to come to join the provincial governor. And I think that if the battle had been lost, Rome might have given up and withdrawn after just 17 years of rule in Britain.

> "Boudicca burned Colchester and killed all the Romans living there. Then she destroyed London and St Albans, too"

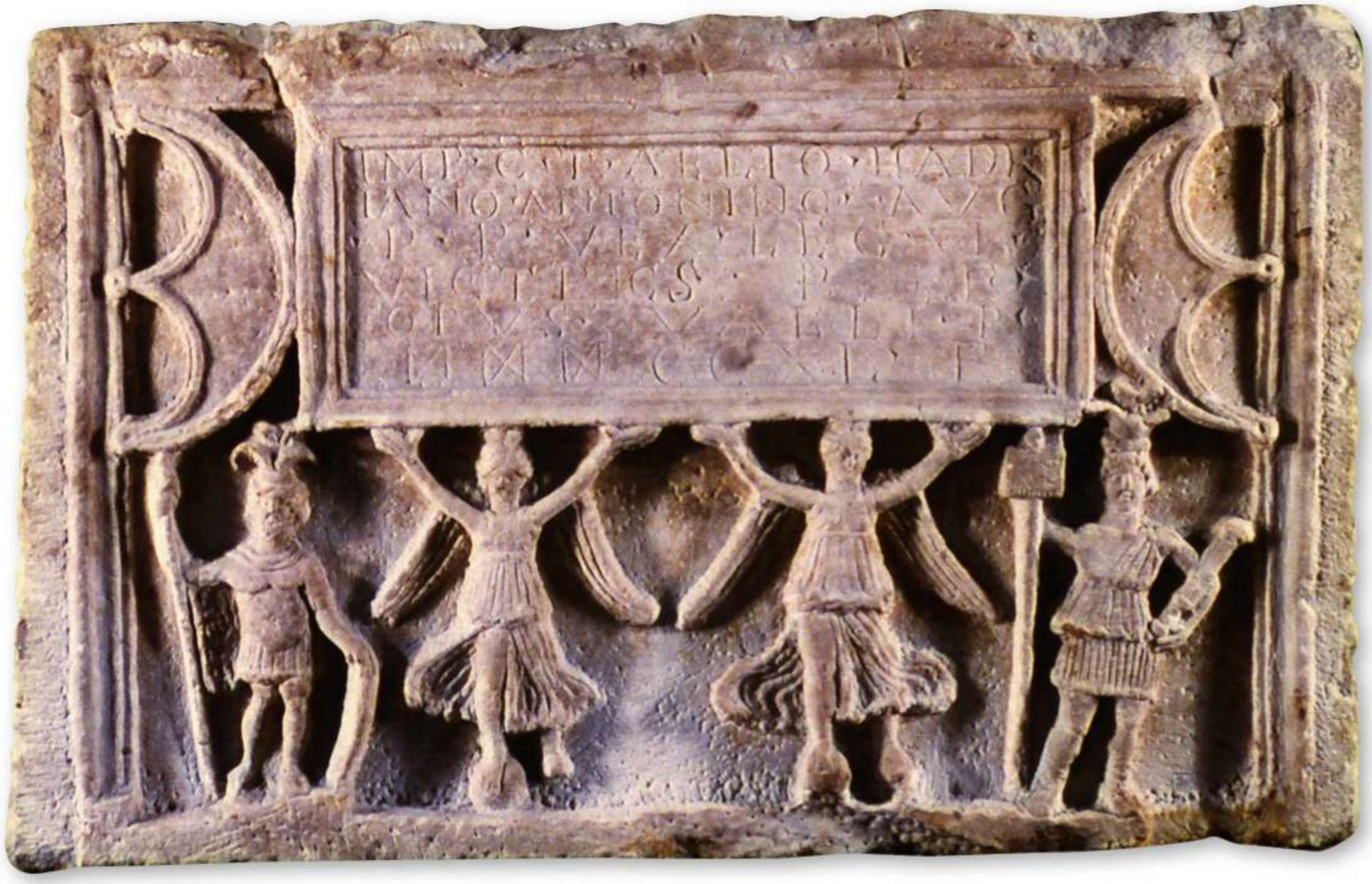
Prior to the construction of Hadrian's Wall from AD 122, did the Romans make attempts to conquer all of Britain, including what we now know as Scotland?
They almost certainly did intend to conquer the whole of Britain when they started their campaign in AD 43. Following Boudicca's defeat, there was a period in which they resettled Britain and established order again, but there was then a period of time, roughly from AD 70 through to the mid-80s, in which they conquered most of the rest of Britain. They had been fighting in what's now Wales for well over a decade, but they gradually finished off the opposition in Wales and controlled it. Meanwhile, they were moving north through what is now northern England towards Scotland.

There was a famous governor called Agricola who moved with a military force right up the east coast of Scotland. His story was told by his son-in-law, Tacitus. Agricola won a big victory at a battle called Mons Graupius in AD 84, the most likely location of which is just west of modern-day Aberdeen. At this stage, in population terms, they

ALAMY

Line of duty At the command of Hadrian's successor, Antoninus Pius, Roman legions constructed a second wall, in what's now Scotland, establishing a new frontier further to the north. Running 37 miles from the Firth of Forth to the river Clyde, the Antonine Wall was made from turf and fortified by a deep ditch

Landmark legacy The builders of the Antonine Wall left ornate distance slabs to celebrate the completion of each section, forming a remarkable collection of Roman sculpture. This stone, found near Duntocher Fort in 1812, marks 3,240 feet and bears an inscription to Antoninus Pius from the "Sixth Victorius, Loyal and Faithful Legion"



DREAMSTIME/BRIDGEMN

had conquered most of Britain but there were still mountainous areas which would be very hard to campaign in for a Roman military occupying force.

And they pulled back from those Scottish territories after two or three years. It coincided with a big conflict in Dacia, which was a kingdom largely situated in modern Romania, and soldiers were withdrawn from Britain to fight there. But I also think that the Romans had overstretched themselves. They had gone into an area of Britain in which it was hard to campaign and even if Dacia had been peaceful, I suspect they hadn't really got the manpower to carry on.

They still occupied parts of southern Scotland, but the main frontier region in the late 80s and 90s is roughly where Hadrian's Wall is located today.

How much resistance did the Romans encounter when campaigning in what we today call Scotland?

The Romans did run into opposition, but we should remember that the Roman authors who wrote about campaigning often stressed the conflicts. They focused on the battles Rome had with these peoples, but the Romans were also carrying out diplomacy right across Britain. There were friendly peoples in Scotland, leaders of communities who cooperated with them. The image we get of Scotland is that everybody was fighting Rome, but there were lots of communities who were living in settlements where we find Roman objects, such as coins and pottery, which were probably gifts to those people because they were cooperating with Rome.

The Romans were fighting really seriously in Scotland and if they had got into the Highlands, they would have faced more problems. But other people were helping them. And it's even possible that some of those friendly peoples in the north were supplying soldiers for Agricola to campaign against their neighbours. We know Agricola had Britons fighting for him, and we tend to assume they came from the south, but they may actually have been soldiers from communities who were siding with the Romans and fighting their immediate neighbours.

Hadrian became emperor in AD 117, and he himself visited Britain in AD 122. What inspired this trip?

There were major conflicts on the Roman frontiers very early in Hadrian's reign, including trouble in Britain. It is even possible, though uncertain, that the troubles in Britain led to the loss of the Ninth Legion while fighting beyond the northern frontier (which was the basis for Rosemary Sutcliff's 1954 novel *The Eagle of the Ninth*). Hadrian

ALAMY

> "There were major conflicts on the Roman frontiers very early in Hadrian's reign, including trouble in Britain"

was determined to re-establish order on the Roman frontiers. So right across the empire, where there were problems, Hadrian was either pulling back soldiers or creating frontiers to make Rome a bit more secure.

We hear from the *Historia Augusta* that: "He [Hadrian] set out for Britain, where he settled many problems and was the first to establish a wall, 80 miles in length, to separate the barbarians from the Romans." Hadrian wanted to establish a firm frontier in Britain, so he instructed the building of the wall and he came to visit in order to inspect the military forces and make sure they were well organised. He probably also came to observe the building of the wall. Even though historically, we have tended to believe that Hadrian commissioned the wall in AD 122, we now think that he may have actually commanded it to be constructed in AD 121 and so it would have been possible for him to see it being built when he visited.

Hadrian intended that the wall would become a monumental structure in a region that had been the frontier of Britain for several decades. It would be a big symbol of imperial power and might. And to an extent it would be a defensive monument because it really controlled the movement of anybody across its line.

Did the wall also symbolise the Roman intention not to make any further attempts to go into Scotland?

They still had roads running further north and they still had forts beyond Hadrian's Wall, so they were certainly intent on controlling the territory immediately beyond the wall. And they would still be carrying out diplomacy with people further north to try to encourage friendly relations. We know from Roman artefacts at sites in Scotland that they maintained these friendly relationships with some peoples to the north of the wall.

One thing Rome was always very keen on acquiring was slaves. They couldn't enslave people in imperial territories, so they took slaves from beyond the frontier. Therefore their friendlier relations with certain people in Scotland might actually have been based on obtaining slaves and other resources.

So they did not give up on controlling and managing that territory, but they probably decided it wasn't worth the resources of trying to conquer it again. Having said that, there were two more occasions after the wall was built in which substantial Roman military forces were sent further north. The first was Hadrian's successor, Antoninus Pius, who ended up building a second wall further north called the Antonine Wall. Later on, Septimius Severus, in the early third century, appeared to be really intent on conquering the whole of Britain and had a massive military force which campaigned quite a long way further north. However his sons – who took over from him – withdrew the military again to Hadrian's Wall.

I think you have to imagine that the Romans were always wanting to control the land beyond the wall. They probably only had direct control over the area 70–100 miles north of it, but they were constantly interfering beyond that line, trying to control people both through the threat of violence and through diplomacy.

How successful was Hadrian's Wall in fulfilling the initial purposes Hadrian had in mind for it?

Hadrian's Wall remained in place certainly until the end of the fourth century. Now, the classical texts, from time to time, talk about "barbarians" – these were the people who were fighting Rome – crossing the wall. So the military garrisons on the wall may have been occasionally overwhelmed. But the impression we get from the archaeology is that it was usually quite a stable frontier.

There were large numbers of people living along the border: very extensive civil settlements or communities of people connected with the military, who were living outside the forts. This suggests that there was a stable society, and although that seems to have changed a bit in the late third and fourth centuries, the military units stayed in place in the forts until the decline and end of Roman Britain, and possibly even beyond.

This gives us the impression that Hadrian's Wall was really effective because it survived for all that time. H

Richard Hingley is a professor of archaeology at Durham University specialising in Iron Age and Roman Britain. His most recent book is *Conquering the Ocean: The Roman Invasion of Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2022)

READ Our **Hadrian's Wall Special** continues overleaf. Turn to p34 for a look at the history of tourism along the wall, and to p39 to find out about the lives of women who lived in communities along the border

Line of sights
Hadrian's Wall snakes along Walltown Crags, Northumberland in this artist's depiction of the frontier in the second century AD. Studded with forts, turrets and milecastles, this magnificent monument has attracted visitors for centuries

GETTY IMAGES

FRONTIER TOURISTS

Since its earliest days, the great barrier at the Roman empire's north-western edge has been a source of wonder. **Rob Collins** traces the history of tourism and souvenirs at Hadrian's Wall

On a June day in 2003, metal detectorists in the north Staffordshire village of Ilam unearthed a curious object. The second-century AD *trulla* – a small saucepan – is made of a copper alloy, inlaid with colourful, slightly psychedelic enamel whirls. What makes the artefact, now known as the Staffordshire Moorlands Pan (or Ilam Pan), special, though, is the Latin inscription running around its rim: MAIS COGGABATA VXELODVNVM CAMMOGLANNA RIGORE VALI AELI DRACONIS.

What does it mean? Well, the first four words are names of Roman forts in Cumbria: Mais (at Bowness-on-Solway), Coggabata (Drumburgh), Uxelodunum (Stanwix) and Cammoglanna (Castlesteads). The second part of the inscription – RIGORE VALI AELI DRACONIS – can be translated as: "Along the line of Hadrian's Wall, [this is the cup of] Draco." If that interpretation is correct, then this is a vessel commissioned by Draco to commemorate his time at these forts – in other words, a souvenir of Hadrian's Wall. And it's not the only one – other pans found elsewhere in Britain and France also reference forts on the wall. So how did a Roman military monument come to inspire such keepsakes?

It may have been at the northern fringes of the Roman empire, but Hadrian's Wall was a cosmopolitan place

Desirable souvenirs

The construction of Hadrian's Wall was unprecedented. It was – and in many ways remains – a unique creation. Once completed, the wall was garrisoned for nearly 300 years, during which time tens of thousands of Roman soldiers served along the monument.

Tombstones and inscriptions provide names and origins of some of the troops – for example, Gaius Cossutius Saturninus of Hippo Regius (now in Algeria) – testifying to the cultural diversity found along the wall. These men were accompanied by women and children, servants and slaves. Millions of tonnes of cereals, meats, beer and wine were required to feed the soldiers. Small settlements arose in which traders and craftsmen could sell and make their wares, further supporting the economy and communities along the border. It may have been at the northern fringes of the Roman empire, but Hadrian's Wall was a cosmopolitan place.

Though constructed as a Roman military monument, the wall was also a sight to behold – and seemingly a destination attracting many visitors during the Roman centuries. The Roman-era pans are a key piece of evidence for this. They have been found in Britain and France and bear decorations and inscriptions commemorating Hadrian's Wall.

The Staffordshire Moorlands Pan (pictured overleaf) seems to be the earliest known example. Its outer surface was cast with curvilinear cells later filled in with vibrant enamel, creating a series of circles or wheel motifs typical of native British decoration dating back to the Iron Age. Above these ran that telling inscription, ending RIGORE VALI AELI DRACONIS (Aelius was Hadrian's

Settled communities The ruins of the Roman fort of Vindolanda, just south of Hadrian's Wall. Tens of thousands of soldiers served along the monument, forming the basis of broader frontier societies

Head of state
A bronze bust of Roman emperor Hadrian, c122 AD, possibly created to celebrate his visit to Britain at around the time the wall was being built

family name so, though a literal translation of the final two words would be "Aelian Wall", it is widely understood as Hadrian's Wall). This suggests that in its own time, in the early second century AD, the barrier was already called Hadrian's Wall, and that a souvenir of the monument was desirable.

Two similar vessels have been found that also bear the names of forts at the western end of Hadrian's Wall, though not always the same forts. They are the Amiens patera, a bronze bowl with a long handle found in 1949 near Amiens, France; and the Rudge Cup (pictured right), found in 1725 near Rudge, Wiltshire. Beyond the fort names, neither vessel features text references to the wall itself, but instead offer tantalising visual references.

The outside of each vessel bears what appears to be a crenellated wall. The Amiens patera features regularly spaced square merlons, each composed of four square cells, with the wall below comprising square cells filled with enamel. The decoration of the Rudge Cup is similar, but lacks the enamel. The square cells may represent stone blocks used to build the wall, and the crenellations may indicate a parapet along the top, or may perhaps be representations of the turrets. Regardless, these vessels point to a souvenir industry tied directly to Hadrian's Wall.

A dead empire

It is difficult to know how widespread detailed knowledge of Hadrian's Wall would have been in the Roman world, but awareness of its existence would probably have been relatively common among those considered well educated. For example, the *Notitia Dignitatum* – a document from around the turn of the fifth century listing imperial officials – includes a brief description of the barrier as being *per lineam valli* (along the line of a valley), followed by a list of the units of soldiers along the line of the wall.

More curious is an entry by the sixth-century Byzantine writer Procopius, who provides a description of the wall that might be familiar to fans of *Game of Thrones*:

Now, in this island of Britain, the men of ancient times built a long wall, cutting off a large part of it... To the [south] of the wall there is a salubrious air... being moderately warm in summer and cool in winter. But on the [north] side... it is actually impossible for a man to survive there even a half hour... Strangest of all, the inhabitants say that if a man crosses the wall and goes to the other side, he dies straightaway. They say, then, that the souls of men who die are always conveyed to this place.

He was so astounded by the quality and wonder of the ruins that he instituted a pilgrimage along the wall in 1849

The wall remained well known even after the end of the Roman occupation of Britain, when it was merely a redundant monument of a dead empire. The historian-monk Bede, writing at the monastery of Jarrow just across the river Tyne from the wall, provides a description in his eighth-century *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. In the 13th century, maps of Britain made by the chronicler Matthew Paris include a crenellated line indicating the position of Hadrian's

GETTY IMAGES/DREAMSTIME

Containers and keepsakes

The vessels known as the Staffordshire Moorlands Pan (above) and Rudge Cup (replica shown right) were probably produced as souvenirs for visitors to Hadrian's Wall during the second century AD, when the barrier was still new

ALAMY/TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM/AKG

Wall; his Latin description of it translates as "the wall that at one time divided the Angles and the Picts".

From the 16th century, antiquarians began visiting the monument and collecting traces of Roman civilisation. One such was William Hutton, who in 1801 walked 600 miles from Birmingham to Carlisle, then along the wall, and back again. In his colourful account of that journey, published the following year as *The History of the Roman Wall*, he writes rather scathingly:

I envied the people in the neighbourhood of the wall, though I knew they valued it no more than the soil on which it stood. I wished to converse with an intelligent resident, but never saw one.

Perhaps the most significant event in recent centuries, however, was the trip along Hadrian's Wall completed in 1848 by John Collingwood Bruce of Newcastle. He was so astounded by the quality and wonder of the ruins that he instituted a pilgrimage along the wall in 1849, to encourage more people to explore and enjoy the monument. This tradition continues today, with the pilgrimage undertaken every 10 years. Most recently, in 2019, expert guides led more than 250 people along the wall, highlighting and interpreting the latest discoveries.

Modern visitors to the region will find good cheer and excellent food in the local pubs. They'll also discover that the various historic sites offer any number of Hadrian's Wall souvenirs – just the latest in a long tradition of keepsakes of this ancient and enduringly popular tourist destination. H

Rob Collins is senior lecturer in archaeology at Newcastle University, and author of *Hadrian's Wall and the End of Empire: The Roman Frontier in the 4th and 5th Centuries* (Routledge, 2012)

LISTEN Melvyn Bragg and experts discuss **Hadrian's Wall** on BBC Radio 4's *In Our Time* at *bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b01kkr42*

MORE FROM US Listen to **Rob Collins discussing the wall** on a recent episode of our HistoryExtra podcast at *historyextra.com/hadrians-wall-podcast*

The long afterlife of Hadrian's Wall

c410 The **Roman occupation of Britain ends**, according to traditional thought. Evidence from forts along Hadrian's Wall, however, suggests that **soldiers continue to live in the forts** and presumably garrison the wall.

633 or 634

King Oswald of Northumbria (right) **camps his army** beside Hadrian's Wall. The following day, he defeats Cadwallon of Gwynedd and Penda of Mercia at the battle of Heavenfield, and becomes the most prestigious king of early medieval Britain.

1066–1700 Castles, towers, churches, monasteries and farms are built on, beside or near Hadrian's Wall **using stone taken from the Roman ruins**.

1751–58 A new **military road** connecting Newcastle and Carlisle is constructed, with most of the eastern half of the road **built directly on top of the ruins** of Hadrian's Wall. This road is the modern B6318.

1834–90 **John Clayton**, town clerk of Newcastle, purchases land along Hadrian's Wall, creating a large estate and **helping to preserve the monument**. Following his death, much of this land forms the core of the National Trust's holdings along Hadrian's Wall.

A group of Hadrian's Wall pilgrims from one of John Collingwood Bruce's landmark tours

1849 The first **pilgrimage of Hadrian's Wall** is led by John Collingwood Bruce. The tradition continues, with a pilgrimage undertaken every 10 years (most recently in 2019).

1987 A collection of frontier sites, including Hadrian's Wall, is inscribed on the **Unesco World Heritage List**.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FROM JUST £1

SUMMER SALE

Summer is finally here and now is the perfect time to subscribe to one of our bestselling magazines. Keep yourself entertained with fantastic content, whether you're spending time abroad or enjoying the sunshine closer to home.

FOOD

5 ISSUES FOR £5

5 ISSUES FOR £5

5 ISSUES FOR £5

HOMES & GARDENS

3 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

LIFESTYLE

5 ISSUES FOR £5

12 ISSUES FOR £1

3 ISSUES FOR £5

SCIENCE & NATURE

3 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

HISTORY

5 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

SPORT

3 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

CRAFT

3 ISSUES FOR £5

3 ISSUES FOR £5

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

Subscriptions from £1 • Free delivery direct to your door • Fantastic summer savings

2 EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE

Visit **buysubscriptions.com/SS22SP**

Call **0330 053 8660†** quote code **SS22SP**

SCAN ME

*This offer closes on 14th August 2022 and is valid for UK delivery addresses and by direct debit only. The discounts shown are savings calculated as a percentage of the full shop price, excluding Radio Times which is calculated as a percentage of the basic annual rate. For overseas rates visit www.buysubscriptions.com. Should the magazine ordered change in frequency; we will honour the number of issues and not the term of the subscription. You are free to cancel your subscription at any time – if you cancel within 2 weeks of receiving your penultimate issue you will pay no more than the trial rate, this is except for Radio Times, which you will need to cancel 3 weeks before the trial is due to end. Radio Times is published weekly and the Basic Annual UK Subscription rate for Radio Times is £223. This price is for one year and includes the Christmas double issue and a contribution towards postage. These rates are correct at time of printing. We run trial offers throughout the year to give our customers an opportunity to try a new title before committing to a long-term subscription. These are introductory offers, and we reserve the right to reject or cancel any application for a trial subscription offer if the customer has previously purchased a trial offer for the same magazine or any other magazine in the Immediate Media portfolio. For a full list of our titles visit buysubscriptions.com/portfolio.
†UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Mon to Fri 9am – 5pm.

Gold Trusted Service Award ★★★★★ feefo

Women

Follower of fashion
A Roman woman has her hair styled by slaves, as depicted on a third-century monument from Germany. High-status women on the frontiers tried to follow the latest Roman fashions, by copying hairstyles from portraits of the emperors' wives. Many decorative hairpins have been found at Hadrian's Wall, while a rare hairnet was discovered at Vindolanda

GETTY IMAGES

on the Wall

The soldiers who garrisoned Hadrian's Wall were all men, but what of the many women of diverse backgrounds who lived on and around the frontier? **Bronwen Riley** selects six objects that offer precious insights into women's lives at the edge of the empire

1 The slave who married her master

A second-century tombstone highlights the contradictory nature of relationships in Roman Britain

As is so often the case when exploring the past, we have a clearer picture of the lives of men – particularly Roman soldiers – on Hadrian's Wall than of the women who lived alongside them. Yet artefacts found on the frontier reveal much about the varied experiences and backgrounds of women in the society that emerged in Britain's military zone.

One most intriguing example is an elaborate gravestone of the mid-to-late second century AD, from the cemetery outside the Roman fort of Arbeia (South Shields). It depicts a woman, dressed in all her finery, sitting with her spindle on her lap. The Latin inscription beneath this picture of domestic comfort and industry tells us this is Regina, a freedwoman, wife of Barates from Palmyra (Syria) and a member of the Catuvellauni tribe, who died at the age of 30. Beneath, a line in Palmyrene laments: "Regina, freedwoman of Barates, alas!"

This tombstone reveals the complex and ambiguous nature of relationships in the Roman world, particularly in Britain, on the empire's north-western frontier. Here is a woman from the peaceful south of Britain – the Catuvellauni tribe were based around Verulamium, near modern-day St Albans – who was enslaved, and bought by a man from Syria. At the time of her death, he had granted her freedom and regarded her (in Latin, at least) as his wife. However, neither Regina nor Barates was a Roman citizen, so any form of marriage they may have contracted would not have been recognised under Roman law.

Barates may have been a merchant, and the style of the gravestone suggests that it was the work of a Palmyrene craftsman, implying the existence of a Syrian community in Arbeia.

How did this enslaved southern British woman end up on Hadrian's Wall? She may have been born into slavery or sold into slavery by her family, or was perhaps an orphan or foundling. Regina is Latin for "queen", so hers is likely a slave's nickname – ironic or admiring, perhaps a mixture of both. Did the trader who sold her call her that, or was it Barates' name for her?

Love on the edge
ABOVE: The gravestone of Regina, a formerly enslaved British woman
BELOW: This gold ring found close to Hadrian's Wall and dating to the turn of the third century AD may have been a love token or betrothal ring

Perhaps 10,000 men were stationed in the military zone on and around Hadrian's Wall. It may have been thought politic to take women from outside the local area rather than from tribes nearby.

What is left of Regina? Her face is lost and we cannot tell how she wore her hair. She wears a Gallic coat over a tunic – fashionable in both Britain and Gaul. One possible mark of a British identity is the torc around her neck. Regarded as typically Celtic, torcs were worn under Roman occupation, but designed in new styles and materials.

There is a tendency to see in this tombstone a love story – that woeful "Alas!" of Barates who freed and married his "Queenie". But the Palmyrene text is no more than the equivalent of "RIP" and reinforces Barates' identity rather than Regina's.

THE CLASSICAL WORLD-FLICKR/BRIDGEMAN

Altar ego Diodora, a Greek-speaking priestess who lived at Corbridge, dedicated this altar to Herakles of Tyre, who was worshipped according to mysterious rites

Cult figure
A bronze statuette found in South Shields depicts a veiled priestess about to perform a sacrifice. Women were attracted to eastern cults as they could take a more active part in rites than in traditional Roman religion

BRITISH MUSEUM IMAGES/GREAT NORTH MUSEUM-HANCOCK

2 The mystery of the priestess from the east

An altar reveals the only priestess known by name in Britain

Diodora was a priestess in Corbridge, a busy Roman town on the banks of the Tyne 2.5 miles south of Hadrian's Wall, situated at an important crossing point over the river at the intersection of key roads. Diodora's name – and the Greek inscription she wrote on the altar that she dedicated to Herakles of Tyre – suggests that she came from the eastern part of the empire, where Greek was the predominant language.

The cult she served as priestess was rather niche, originating in the port city of Tyre in the province of Syria, and was one of several eastern religions for which there is evidence at Corbridge. Worship of the cult may have been brought to northern Britain by soldiers or merchants (such as Barates of Syria, husband of Regina, discussed opposite), or by troops who had become devotees of the god while serving in the eastern part of the empire in the 160s AD during the Parthian Wars.

The earliest known temples at Corbridge date from this period, when the fort became a supply base for the northern frontier, with detachments of legionaries stationed here. Naturally, such a depot attracted traders and merchants of all sorts.

How, from where and for what reason Diodora arrived in Corbridge and became a devotee of the god remains a mystery. Nor is it clear if she served the cult as a career priestess, or if her title was honorary – a sort of social distinction with a few light ceremonial duties attached. Priests and priestesses could be elected or sometimes inherited their roles; in some regions, they could buy their offices.

Women likely had a very limited role in traditional Roman religion. They were largely excluded from playing any significant part in religious public life, with very few exceptions – for example, the Vestal Virgins (priestesses of the goddess Vesta) or in supporting roles to their husbands. They seem to have been forbidden to butcher animals or handle undiluted wine, both key components in animal sacrifice. Nor could they invoke prayers on behalf of a community.

By contrast, in Greek religion priestesses sometimes had key public responsibilities and were given honours and duties on a par with priests. So the appeal of many eastern or fringe cults that offered women more scope for participation – Christianity included – is understandable.

Social network
Two women with wax tablet and stylus from a fresco from Herculaneum. Surviving letters from Vindolanda show that officers' wives stationed at forts along the wall corresponded affectionately with one other and arranged social events by letter

3

The birthday party on Hadrian's Wall

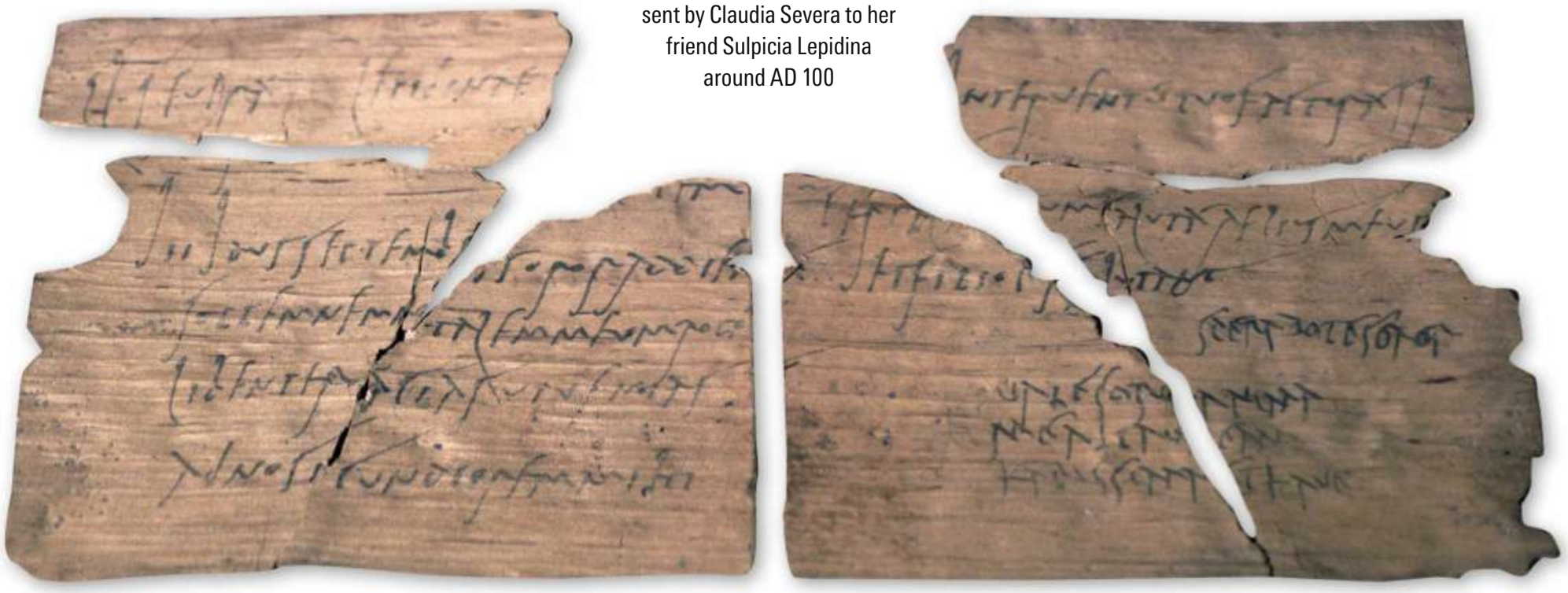
An invitation offers a rare insight into life as a Roman wife

Claudia Severa's letters to her friend Sulpicia Lepidina are among the most personal of more than 2,000 found at Vindolanda, where Lepidina's husband was the prefect of the ninth cohort of Batavians. In her letters, Severa invites her friend to celebrate her birthday (pictured below), eagerly plans visits, and exchanges news about her husband and children. Severa dictated her letters to a secretary but wrote the affectionate endings herself: "I will hope for you, sister. Farewell, sister, my dearest soul, as I hope to prosper, and hail." In another fragment she describes Lepidina as her *desideratissima* (most longed-for) soul.

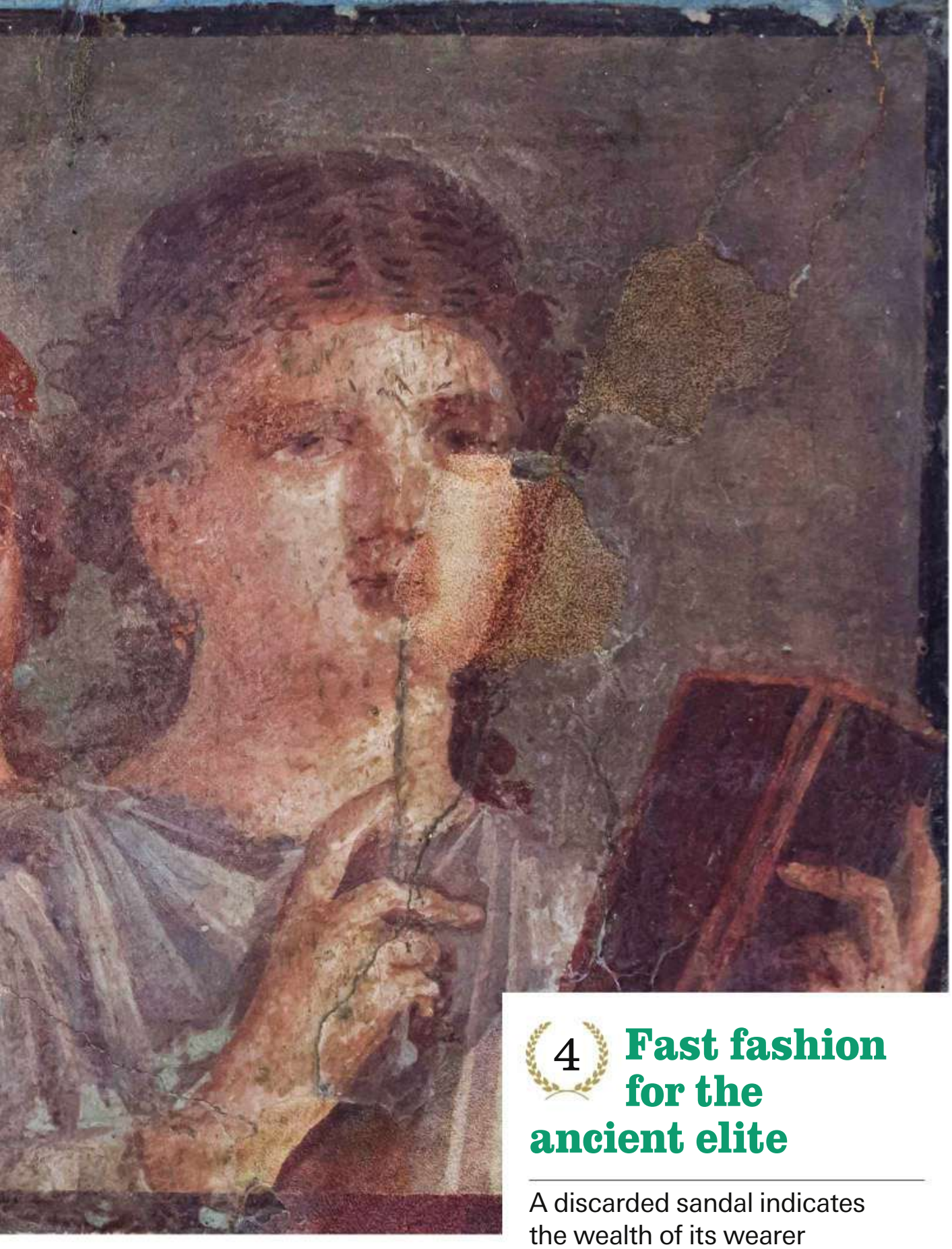
Written at the beginning of the second century, Severa's letters represent the earliest known examples of a woman's handwriting in Latin. Her sign-offs may express the warmth and exuberance of her character but perhaps also reflect the intimate way women of her background customarily addressed each other ("sister" does not necessarily imply they were related). One also detects in them a sense of isolation, and Severa's longing for the company of other women of her own age and background.

Severa appears to have had an affectionate relationship with her husband. However, as wives the women were subject to their husbands, and clearly needed their permission to travel. Living at a military base on the empire's remote north-western frontier added numerous other constraints to these women's lives. The roads would have been in a terrible state at certain times of the year, and there may have been restrictions in place for travelling around the frontier zone; in any case, the women would have needed some sort of escort.

Until AD 197, rank-and-file soldiers could not contract legal marriages. This did not preclude soldiers from having relationships or families in the settlements that inevitably grew up around the forts. Inside the forts, though, only the prefects and centurions could officially have their families with them, which must have greatly constrained the women's social lives.



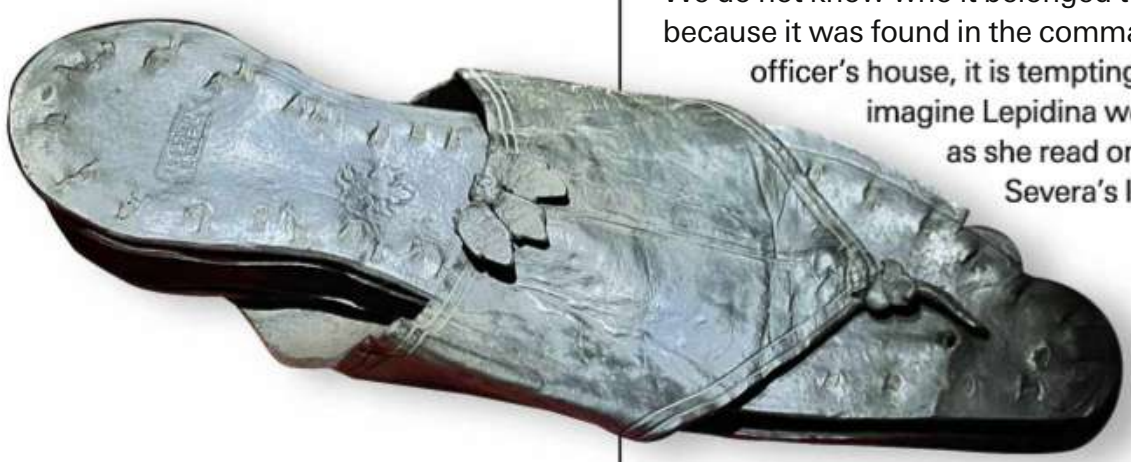
Roman RSVP
An invitation to a birthday party sent by Claudia Severa to her friend Sulpicia Lepidina around AD 100



4 Fast fashion for the ancient elite

A discarded sandal indicates the wealth of its wearer

Good as new
This slipper is of the highest-quality Gallic craftsmanship. While many of the shoes found at Vindolanda show signs of careful repair, this sandal looks hardly worn, and was apparently discarded when the thong snapped



Among other extraordinary organic material found at Vindolanda is this rather exquisitely decorated sandal, stamped with the name of its Gallic maker, Lucius Aebutius Thales. It would have been worn as a house shoe, over a bare foot or with a slotted sock. It seems to have been discarded after the toe thong snapped, with no sign of any attempts at repair – indicating that its owner had access to other fine footwear. We do not know who it belonged to but, because it was found in the commanding officer's house, it is tempting to imagine Lepidina wearing it as she read one of Severa's letters.

5 Spinning a yarn

This spindle whorl reminds us of women's labour in the Roman era

Spinning wool was seen as women's work – the essence of female domesticity. Even women of the highest status were expected at least to supervise their household in the task. Spinning was a crucial domestic task for women, because a constant supply of thread was needed to be woven into cloth. Beyond the immediate requirements of the individual household, there were also thousands of soldiers on the wall to be clothed. Britain was highly prized for the quality of its wool, and its blankets and cloaks were also exported.

Wooden spindles rarely survive, but spindle whorls – made from stone, bone, jet, lead or ceramics – are commonly found on archaeological sites. Acting as weights on the spindle, adding momentum to the spinning, their size varied depending on the type of wool and form of yarn required. This amber spindle whorl was found in the settlement that grew up around Old Penrith, a fort at the centre of key trade routes on the road to Carlisle.

Weight of expectation
An amber spindle whorl found at Old Penrith fort. Distaff and spindle are often depicted on tombstones, symbolising ideal Roman womanhood

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY/THE VINDOLANDA TRUST/ TULLIE HOUSE

6 A happy life cut short

The death of a young girl is evidence of the persistence of indigenous beliefs along the frontier

How sad Sudrenus must have been as he commissioned the gravestone for his daughter Ertola, "properly called Vellibia", who "led the happiest of lives for four years and 60 days". Having died in the late third or early fourth century, Ertola was buried at Corbridge, a town that seems to have attracted a sizeable indigenous population: more Celtic stone heads have been found here than at any other site in the north. The little girl is depicted on the gravestone clutching a round object, commonly interpreted as a ball. The names Sudrenus and Ertola are Celtic, as is the decoration of the gravestone, far removed in style from the classical tradition. A Roman girl would often take a feminine form of her father's name (so a daughter of Claudius Severus could be called Claudia Severa), but Celtic girls' names seem to have been less rigidly prescribed. The name Cartimandua (queen of the northern Brigantes tribes), for example, means "white filly".

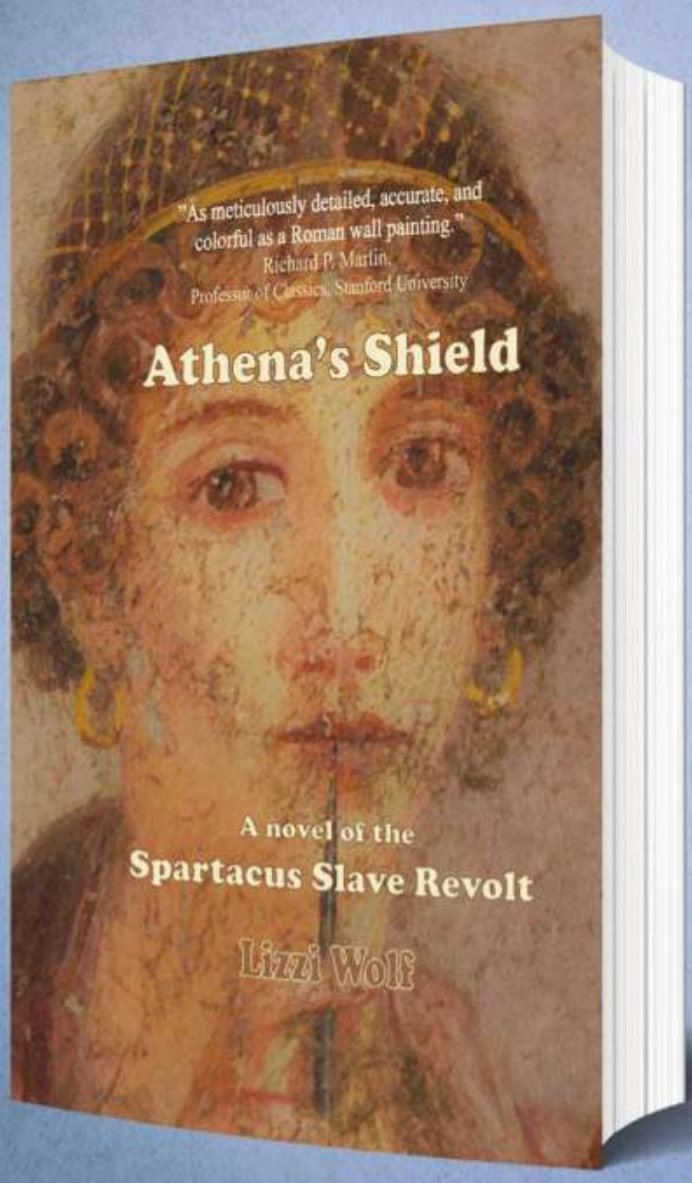
Before the occupation, British women seem to have enjoyed greater freedom than their Roman counterparts. Though we hear about the British queens Cartimandua and Boudicca only through a deeply prejudiced Roman filter, accounts show that they were independent rulers who owned property, led armies into battle and divorced their husbands. Under Roman law, girls could be legally married from the age of 12, but there is evidence that in Britain girls married later. There are also persistent reports that British women had much freer sexual relationships with men. Outside the immediate Roman sphere of the towns and forts, British women may have remained subject to local rather than Roman law in terms of marriage or inheritance. The Romans often thought it would be too inflammatory to meddle with such rules unless absolutely necessary.

This tombstone provides an intimate insight into the grief of a father for his young daughter. It's also a poignant reminder that women of all ages and backgrounds – and from all parts of Britain and the empire – lived, loved, worked and died along Hadrian's Wall. H

Bronwen Riley is a classicist and author whose latest book is *Journey to Britannia: From the Heart of Rome to Hadrian's Wall, AD 130* (Apollo paperback edition, 2022)

Grave accent
The gravestone of young Ertola, daughter of Sudrenus, found at the town of Corbridge a little south of the wall. Its style is far removed from the classical tradition and shows the persistence of indigenous beliefs and influence

ENGLISH HERITAGE


"As meticulously detailed, accurate, and colorful as a Roman wall painting."
Richard P. Martin,
Professor of Classics, Stanford University
Athena's Shield
A novel of the
Spartacus Slave Revolt
Lizzi Wolf

ATHENA'S SHIELD

a novel of the
Spartacus Slave Revolt

Lizzi Wolf

"As meticulously detailed, accurate, and colorful as a Roman wall painting."

Richard P. Martin, Professor of Classics, Stanford University

Available on Amazon

HELP THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN SO MUCH.

By leaving a gift in your Will you can give back to soldiers, veterans and their families for life.

Find out more about leaving a gift in your Will to ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

Tel: 0207 901 8912
Email: legacies@soldierscharity.org
Visit: www.soldierscharity.org/legacies

ABF THE SOLDIERS' CHARITY
The Army's National Charity

Photo © Naomi Gabrielle Photography

ABF The Soldiers' Charity is a registered charity in England and Wales (1144420) and Scotland (039189). Registered as a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (07974609). Registered Office: Mountbarrow House, 12 Elizabeth Street, London SW1W 9RB

Dorothy Levitt
Edwardian speed queen

By breaking records, winning titles and defeating her male adversaries, one fearless racing driver became a founding mother of women's motor sports. **RACHEL HARRIS-GARDINER** explores how Dorothy Levitt built her legend, both with her achievements behind the wheel and as a media sensation

ON THE EI PODCAST

The usual quiet and calm of Brighton's seafront was shattered on a July day in 1905 as racing cars thundered down a newly laid stretch of tarmac, later named Madeira Drive, to the cheers of the long lines of spectators. One of the races in the inaugural outing of the south coast town's Speed Trials was in its final stages, contested by Algernon Lee Guinness, driving a 100-horsepower Darracq, and a 23-year-old woman called Dorothy Levitt, piloting a green 80-horsepower Napier.

Guinness may have hailed from the famous brewing family, but behind the wheel he was no match for Levitt. Reaching 79.75 miles per hour, she set a women's land speed record on her way to winning her class, as well as the sweepstakes and a trophy. Levitt's victory made her one of the first women to triumph at a motor race ahead of the male competitors; a "great many professional drivers", as she recorded it in her diary. Yet it was just the latest of her achievements as a racer, of both cars and motor boats – and it would not be the last for the fastest woman of the Edwardian age.

Between 1903 and 1908, Levitt drove in all manner of events, including hillclimbs, long-distance trials, races and speed-record runs, in the UK, France and Germany. She set a record for the longest continuous drive by a woman by motoring from London to Liverpool and back in two days, accompanied not by a mechanic but her near-constant companion, Dodo, her Pomeranian. At the taxing Herkomer Trial in Germany, where she competed in 1907 and 1908, she won a silver plate for completing all the sections without incurring a penalty, and even made it back in time to upstage her female rival, Frau Lautmann, by appearing in a vivid green dress.

> "Levitt's book for female drivers recommended carrying a powder puff, 'soothing' chocolates, and a revolver when travelling solo"

Levitt's favourite events were the beach-front speed trials that had grown in popularity at the time – an irresistible combination of speed and danger with the fashionable holiday setting of the promenades – and on top of her 1905 success in Brighton, she raced to class wins at Southport, Bexhill and Blackpool. It was at the latter, in 1906, that Levitt barely escaped serious injury when the front of her Napier's bonnet flew off during the run, but she still managed to break her own speed record by reaching nearly 91 mph. The press dubbed her "the fastest girl on Earth".

From the beginning, Levitt's adventures were seized upon by the newspapers and journals. *The Sketch* reported in 1903 that her appearance in reliability trials was "hailed with enthusiasm throughout the countryside, and she was undoubtedly the chief attraction with spectators". In 1910, *Tatler* magazine described her as "perhaps the most skilful and intrepid lady motorist of today".

Her fame at the wheel led Levitt to a second career in journalism, where she became a leading advocate for the rights of women to drive. This culminated in the 1909 publication of *The Woman and the Car: A Chatty Little Handbook for All Women Who Motor or Want to Motor*, her book explaining the workings of a car engine and controls, and tips for when on the road. It also featured a chapter on the correct dress for motoring and useful accessories to carry. Alongside a powder puff ("unless you despise them") and chocolates ("very soothing!"), Levitt recommended a revolver for protection when travelling solo, and a hand mirror for checking behind from time to time. This may well be the first-known mention of a rear-view mirror.

Inventing a background

In a world before women had the vote, Levitt cut a dashingly modern figure who excelled in self-promotion: fuelling her legend by using the media in ways that today's influencers may not even dare. Simply, she never let the truth get in the way of a good story. Her claim in her book that she was the first Englishwoman to take part in a "public motor contest" could be put down to honest ignorance that fellow driving pioneer Louise Bazalgette had taken this honour in 1900, driving a Benz in the 1,000 Miles Trial. But her assertion in a 1906 interview with the *Penny Illustrated Paper* that, as an in-demand society driving instructor, she taught Queen Alexandra and "the royal princesses" how to drive is almost certainly false. While the queen never commented, she was known to be driving herself around in a Columbia electric car by 1901.

Levitt invented a whole background for herself, waxing lyrical on her love of hunting and fishing, and alluding to a

ILLUSTRATION BY **RACHEL DICKENS**

ALAMY/GETTY IMAGES/DREAMSTIME

rural childhood "in the West Country". Her interest was supposedly sparked by a visit from a mysterious "family friend", who worked in the industry and taught a young Levitt to drive. In later versions of this tale, this friend helped her escape an arranged marriage.

This was miles from the truth. Levitt – born Elizabeth Dorothy Levi in 1882 – grew up in east London in a Jewish family, and never lived in the countryside. Her tea merchant father altered the family name to Levitt to make it more anglicised. It seems that while living with her parents in 1903, she had a brush with the law when she sued the driver of a van who had hit her car in Clerkenwell. She had been travelling with a friend, Hena Frankton, both of whom were working as typists at the time. That same year, she was fined £5 for speeding in Hyde Park.

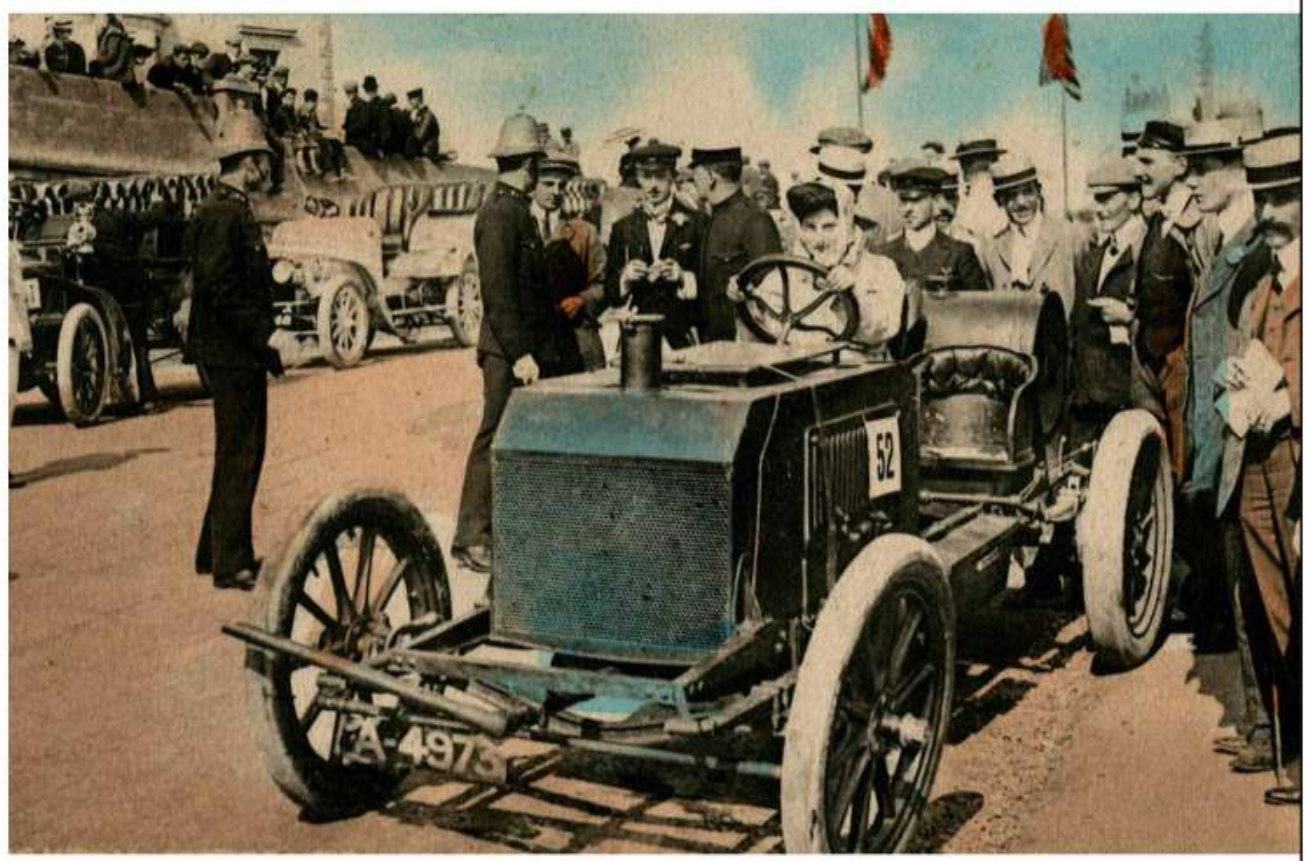
Levitt's claims in the press intended to portray her as always a woman of independent means and independent mind. In terms of how she took up motor sports, however, this is again not strictly true, since never far from her was Selwyn Francis Edge, director of Napier Motor Company. He first got involved as a means of promoting his business, understanding the value of a female figurehead after using his wife, from whom he had become estranged, in the publicity of his earlier ventures. Levitt probably met Edge while working as a typist for Napier, before becoming his secretary. Their business relationship soon bloomed – as did, possibly, a romantic one.

Another of Levitt's tall tales was that she learned all she had to know about cars from an apprenticeship arranged by Edge in a French automobile factory. But the renowned racing driver and journalist SCH Davies claimed Edge actually got a Napier employee, Leslie Callingham, to teach her to drive. It was an experience he thoroughly disliked, complaining of Levitt's "scent" and "tangles of bracelets". Soon, however, Napier was providing her with the vehicles that made her motor sport career possible.

Levitt did not pontificate much about what made her a good driver, although in 1905 she commented to a *Dundee*

Dorothy Levitt poses in a 26-horsepower Napier at the Brooklands circuit in 1908, where she, as a woman, was not allowed to compete

In an image from her 1909 book, *The Woman and the Car*, Levitt demonstrates how to make sure a car engine is working properly



A colourised photograph of one of Levitt's greatest motoring achievements: her triumph at the 1905 Brighton Speed Trials, where she beat all the male drivers and set a women's land speed record

Evening Post journalist: "I found myself possessed of the requisite coolness, which counts for so much."

Edge provided Levitt with many opportunities, but he could be controlling. When her first exploits in boats saw her, in 1903, set a water speed record of 19.3mph, it was Edge, as the boat's owner, who received the accolade. Then in 1905, Levitt was invited to drive a Mors car in the inaugural Tourist Trophy on the Isle of Man, only for Edge to veto this as Mors was not a brand imported by Napier. The end of Levitt's partnership with Napier came when the company's motor sport programme became focused on making runs at the recently-opened Brooklands circuit in Surrey, despite them not accepting women. Levitt was excluded.

By 1908, Napier's support was gone and Levitt focused on her motoring articles. She also branched into general journalism, including a lively think piece on the evils of the corset, in which she claimed never to wear one due to her natural 18-inch waist. Hungry for another challenge, though, she apparently travelled to France in 1909 to learn to fly an aircraft, but it is unclear whether she qualified as a pilot. In 1912, Levitt attempted a driving comeback by accompanying Gladys de Havilland on a record run from Land's End to John O'Groats. It never got going as she pulled out due to illness on the day.

After 1913, Levitt disappeared from view: she published no more articles, has no record of service during the First World War, and appears on no civic registers. There were no more tales, it seemed. The next we hear of her is in 1920, when she was arrested at a London flat being used as an illegal gambling den. She gave her address as 50a Upper Baker Street. That was where she would be found dead two years later, at the age of 40. The official cause of death was heart disease, morphine poisoning and an attack of measles. The coroner's verdict was "death by misadventure", suggesting an accidental overdose. It was a tragic end to a life of high speed, and high drama. H

> "When Levitt set a water speed record, it was the boat's owner, Selwyn Edge, who received the accolade"

Rachel Harris-Gardiner is a motor-sport journalist and editor of the *Speedqueens* blog, with a special interest in female race and rally drivers around the world

READ

The Woman and the Car: A Chatty Little Handbook for all Women Who Motor or Who Want to Motor by Dorothy Levitt (Available to read online at *gutenberg.org*)

GETTY IMAGES/PUBLIC DOMAIN/ALAMY

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER

TRY 3 ISSUES FOR £5

when you subscribe to BBC HISTORY REVEALED today!

MARY I AND PHILIP OF SPAIN: A TUDOR LOVE STORY?
THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING H-BOMB SECRET
BBC HISTORY REVEALED
YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO
ANCIENT GREECE
Discover one of the world's greatest civilisations – from the birth of democracy to the wrath of the gods
THE GREAT SUNDAY SQUAT OF 1946
PLUS Q&A: Were Roman soldiers paid in salt? What is a thagomizer?
10 QUOTATIONS THAT DEFINED THE 20TH CENTURY
BBC HISTORY REVEALED
100th issue
YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE
WARS OF THE ROSES
The medieval clash that tore England apart and launched the Tudor dynasty
WHAT IF THE WHITE SHIP HADN'T SUNK?
PLUS World War I munitionettes In a nutshell: ancient pyramids
N HELL CAME TO PEARL HARBOR
SECRETS OF THE RENAISSANCE
BBC HISTORY REVEALED
WHAT IF... EDWARD VIII HAD NEVER ABDICATED?
YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO
HE MEDIEVAL CHURCH
ver the power of religion in the le Ages – from cradle to grave
THE COURT CASE THAT CHANGED TRANS RIGHTS FOR DECADES
&A: What was a bonnacon? Who invented the bikini?

- Receive your **first 3 issues for only £5**
- **Risk free trial offer** – you may cancel your subscription at any time.
- **Free UK delivery** direct to your door, at no extra charge!
- Never miss an issue of this action packed magazine, **suitable for all members of the family**

SUBSCRIBE ONLINE OR CALL US

www.buysubscriptions.com/HRHA22

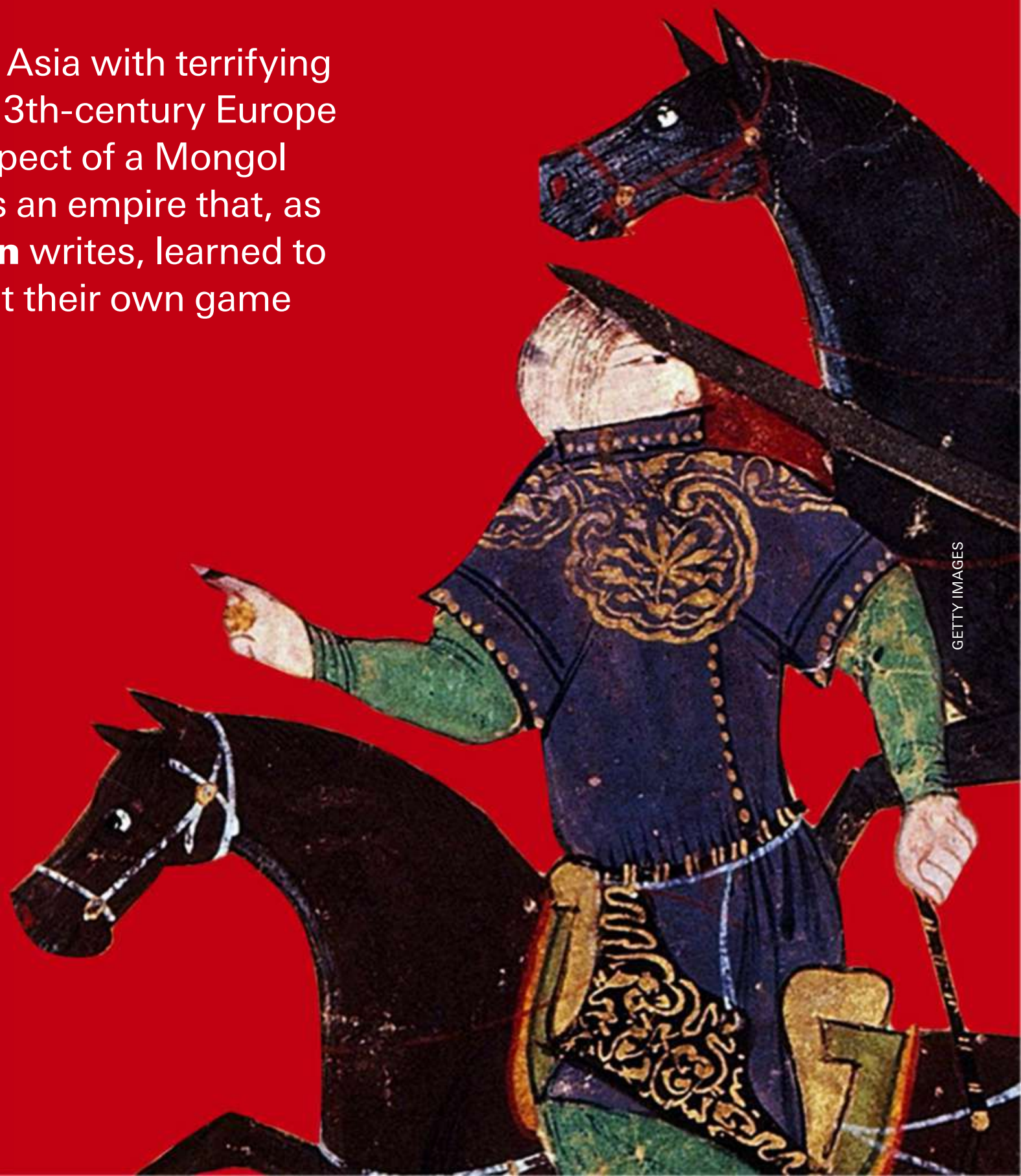
03330 162 116† Quote code HRHA22

†UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff. Outside of free call packages calls charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm. Overseas readers call +44 1604 973 723.

*3 issues for £5 is available for UK customers only paying by Direct Debit. After your first 3 issues, your subscription will continue at £19.99 every 6 issues, saving 39% off the shop price thereafter. You may cancel your subscription at any time. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. **Offer ends 31st December 2022.**

How to repel a MONGOL INVASION

They swept across Asia with terrifying efficiency. Yet, as 13th-century Europe quaked at the prospect of a Mongol invasion, there was an empire that, as **Nicholas Morton** writes, learned to beat the invaders at their own game



GETTY IMAGES

Evenly matched
Mongol and Mamluk cavalry clash in a 14th-century manuscript. The Mamluks learned to ride, shoot and hunt from an early age, nullifying many of the Mongols' natural martial advantages

In 1247, the papal envoy John of Plano Carpini returned home a worried man. During the past two years, he had travelled across the greater part of the vast Mongol empire and his experiences confirmed his fears that the Mongols were both exceptionally dangerous and that they were readying themselves for a second assault on Europe.

"It is the intention of the Tartars [Mongols] to bring the whole world into subjection if they can," Carpini declared, and the evidence of the past decade appeared to support this observation. Back in 1236 – having established a vast empire spanning from the Sea of Japan to the shores of the Caspian Sea, in one of the most extraordinary feats of conquest in human history, the Mongols had begun a new offensive into western Eurasia. City after city fell to their forces, including Kyiv in 1240. "After they had besieged the city for a long time," reported Carpini, "they took it and put the inhabitants to death."

In 1241, the Mongols launched an invasion of the kingdoms of Hungary and Poland, causing widespread destruction and defeating every army sent against them. With advancing troops on the outskirts of Vienna, western Europe appeared to be at the mercy of the Mongol juggernaut. But then, suddenly, they were gone. The Mongol emperor,

The Mongols were exceptionally dangerous – and now they were preparing for a second wave of assaults on Europe

Ögödei, had died and his armies returned home to elect a new leader.

Christendom's worst nightmare was averted. But not for long. Now, in 1247, a new assault appeared imminent and Carpini fully recognised that western Europe's rulers could not offer much of a defence. It was for this reason that he had refused the Mongols' request that he should return to Europe with a group of their envoys – he didn't want them to witness just how divided Christendom had become.

Carpini had every reason to fear for Europe's fate. After all, the Mongols rarely suffered defeat. They occasionally experienced setbacks yet for the most part their armies were overwhelmingly successful, achieving victory against an astonishingly wide range of commanders and civilisations.

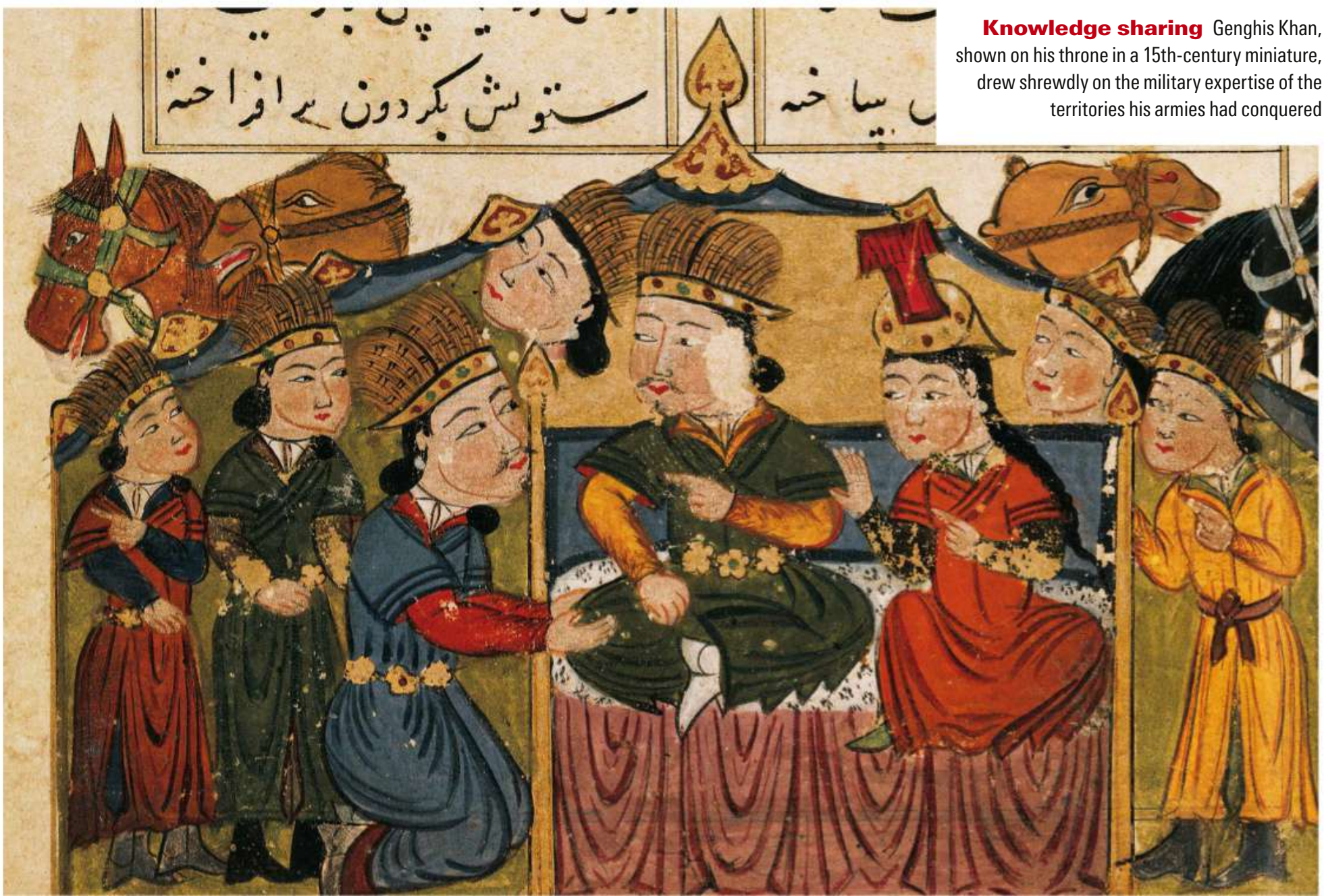
Still Carpini was not utterly without hope. He spent much of his journey speaking to individuals from across Eurasia and, amid his many enquires and conversations, he had a single underlying question: how could the Mongols be stopped?

Great massed hunts

The root of the Mongols' success lay in their way of life. As a predominantly nomadic people living in the central Asian steppe, their children learned to ride, shoot, hunt and corral herds from an early age. These skills were essential for their survival, but they also provided an excellent basis for a powerful army, while the Mongols' great massed hunts taught their riders to co-ordinate their efforts over a broad geography.

These martial qualities were longstanding strengths for the nomadic peoples of central Asia, but the Mongols' former leader Genghis Khan (died 1227) had proved especially adept at enhancing these advantages. He achieved this by drawing upon the military expertise of specialists from conquered societies – such as siege engineers from China – or by inducting defeated warriors into the Mongol army.

The Mongols also became famous for their



Knowledge sharing Genghis Khan, shown on his throne in a 15th-century miniature, drew shrewdly on the military expertise of the territories his armies had conquered

GETTY IMAGES

military stratagems. A favoured tactic when besieging a fortress was to drive a group of prisoners against their enemy's defences in the first wave of the assault. These prisoners absorbed the defenders' ammunition and energies prior to the Mongols' main assault. Another advantage enjoyed by the Mongols was that their mounted armies could cross huge distances at speed and, because they brought their own herds with them, they didn't require cumbersome supply lines.

Dusty dogs of war

So, given these conspicuous strengths, how *were* the Mongols to be defeated? Carpini gathered numerous theories that promised to solve this riddle, some more workable than others. According to one story, there was a place far to the north where men were born in the form of dogs. When threatened by the Mongols, these dog-men defended themselves by rolling on the ground until their fur was thick with dust. Next, they jumped into an icy stream that froze their dirt-thickened fur into a solid carapace. They then charged at the Mongols whose arrows couldn't penetrate this icy armour.

Carpini also heard that the Mongols encountered problems while crossing a mountain range composed of enormous lodestones whose magnetic power made it impossible for their warriors to direct their metal-headed arrows accurately.

The papal envoy diligently recorded all these stories, but such countermeasures could scarcely be replicated. His own recommendations were more down-to-earth. "Whoever wishes to fight against the Tartars," he counselled, "ought to have the following arms: good strong bows, crossbows, of which they are much afraid, a good supply of arrows, a serviceable axe of strong iron or a battle-axe with a long handle."

Just as significantly, he suggested that any army sent into the field should be organised in the same way as the Mongols' own armies. Mongol armies were structured according to the decimal system, whereby its forces were grouped into units of 10 soldiers. Ten such units were led by a commander of 100 troops; 10 groups of 100 troops were led by a commander of 1,000 troops and so on. This was a highly effective structure, and one that Carpini felt Christendom's commanders should emulate.

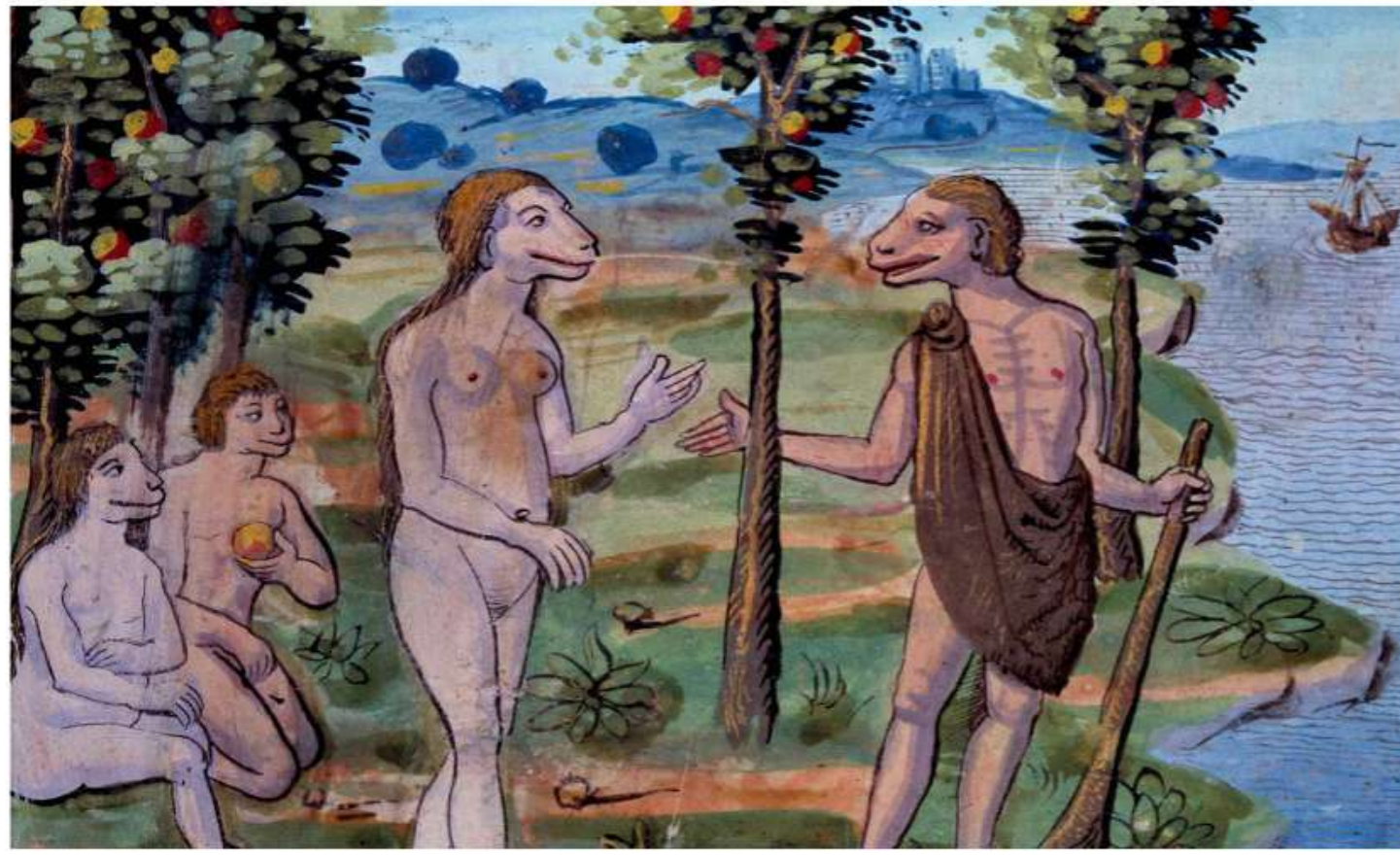
Carpini was right. Defeating the Mongols required an army with similar strengths in war. But Christian armies wouldn't be the ones to prove his point. That task was left to an Egyptian-based power that waged a 60-year war against the Mongols, starting in 1260. That power was the Mamluk empire.

The Mamluks were a relatively recent force in near eastern geopolitics. They were originally slave soldiers who had fought for Egypt's sultans, both against internal rivals and crusaders. By 1250, the Mamluk regiments had become a formidable military force and, when the reigning sultan alienated them, they rose up, killed him, and took power for themselves, establishing their own sultanate.

Ten years later that sultanate was confronted with a major Mongol invasion. The Mongols had initiated an assault on Syria, overthrowing Aleppo before moving south to seize the other regional capital of Damascus. The Mongols now demanded Egypt's formal submission to their authority, but the Mamluks refused. They executed the Mongols' envoy and readied their armies.

This marked the beginning of a conflict – one that turned recent history on its head. For, on almost every occasion that Mamluk and Mongol troops met on the battlefield (1260, 1277, 1281 and 1303), it was the Mamluks who emerged victorious. For decades – as they'd overthrown much of China, advanced through western Asia and fallen upon eastern Europe – the Mongols had swept all before them. But now, at last, they had met their match. So what was the secret of the Mamluks' success?

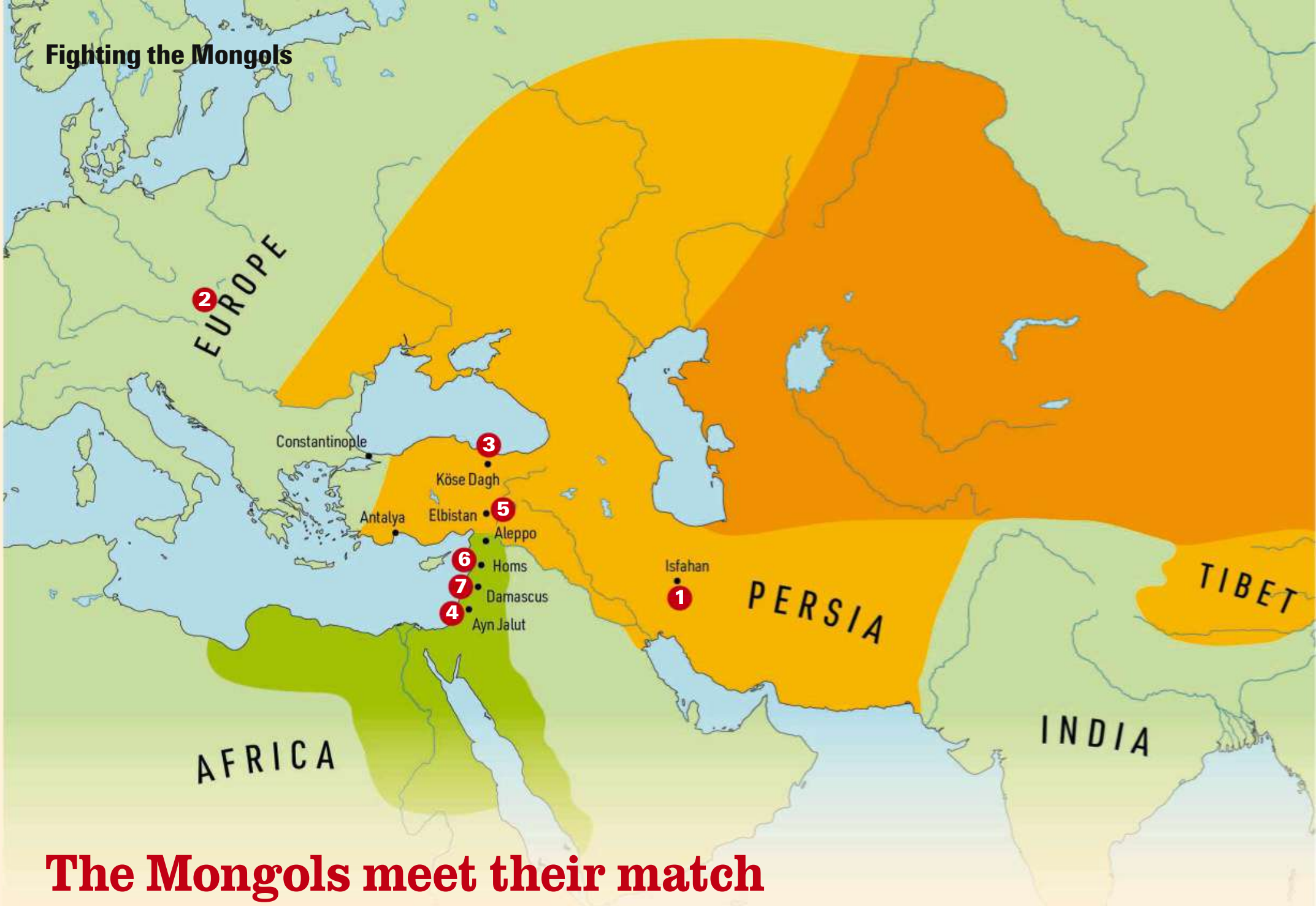
One salient point is that the Mamluks fought in much the same manner as their opponents – a factor that Carpini suspected might prove effective back in the 1240s. Many Mamluk soldiers had been enslaved from the various Turkic peoples who had been conquered or displaced by the Mongols in the Black Sea region. These Turkic communities pursued a similar way of life to that of the Mongols and their warriors possessed the same nomadic/military skills. As a result, the Mamluk and Mongol armies that faced one another in Syria were both entirely mounted, dependent on archery, and arranged



Canine nemesis
Creatures with a human body and a dog's head, shown in a miniature based on Carpini's travels. It was believed that dog-men had an ingenious method of defeating the Mongols in battle

Burning with fear
Mongols raze the city of Ryazan (modern-day Russia) in 1237. Their tactics struck terror into the territories that lay in their path

GETTY IMAGES/AKG



The Mongols meet their match

Our map of the Mongol empire shows seven major battles on its western borders

1 1228: A rare reverse at Isfahan

This is an example of an early Mongol defeat. The Mongols suffered this reverse at Isfahan (in modern-day Iran) at the hands of the local ruler, Jalal al-Din. However, they returned in force in 1240 and eventually conquered the region.

2 1241: Triumph at the Sajo river

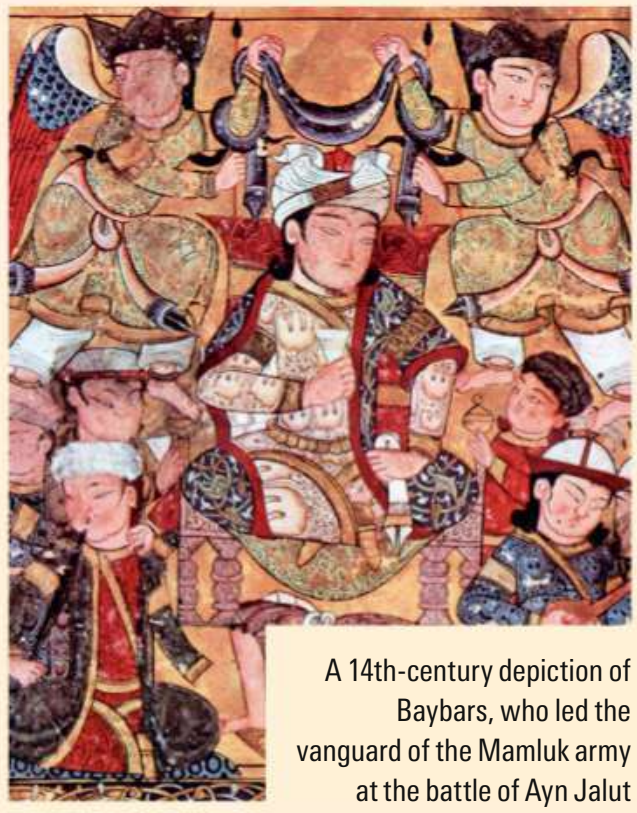
This was the Mongols' most significant battlefield victory during their invasion of Hungary. Fought in large part across a bridge spanning the Sajo, the Mongols initially forced the Hungarian army to retreat and then encircled them in their camp.

A Mongol army advances into Hungary in 1241, as shown in a 15th-century woodcut

3 1243: Subduing the Seljuks

The battle of Köse Dagh (modern-day Turkey) was one of the Mongols' most notable military victories in the near east. It saw them defeat the Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate of Rum, which became a tributary state.

Victory in the battle of Köse Dagh over the Seljuk empire saw much of Anatolia fall under the Mongols' sway



A 14th-century depiction of Baybars, who led the vanguard of the Mamluk army at the battle of Ayn Jalut

BRIDGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

4 1260: Mongol weaknesses exposed

The battle of Ayn Jalut was the Mamluks' first major – and arguably most famous – victory against the Mongols, achieved by their sultan Qutuz. Significantly, the Mamluks did not face the entire Mongol army – which had withdrawn to the east – but rather the Mongols' garrison forces in Syria.

MAP BY **PAUL HEWITT – BATTLEFIELD DESIGN**

5 1277: The Mamluks advance

In 1277 the Mamluks invaded Anatolia (modern-day Turkey), then nominally ruled by the Seljuk dynasty, a Mongol tributary. Their hope was to exacerbate the problems posed to the Mongols by encouraging a widespread rebellion across the region. They encountered and defeated a large Mongol army outside the city of Elbistan.

7 1299: Victory, then retreat

The Mongols' only major battlefield victory against the Mamluks came at Wadi al-Khaznadar, achieved near the city of Damascus. The Mongols conquered Damascus itself soon afterwards but later felt that their position was too precarious to remain in Syria and so they withdrew.

6 1281: A stunning blow at Homs

The battle of Homs was one of the Mamluks' most significant battlefield victories over the Mongols. Won against the odds, the battle initially went badly for the Mamluks, but they managed to force the Mongols to withdraw following a cavalry charge against the Mongol centre. The Mongols did not stage another major assault against the Mamluks until 1299.

A devastating cavalry charge secured the Mamluks victory over the Mongols at Homs in 1281

BRIDGEMAN

The Mamluks had nowhere to go and no place to retreat. They either had to defeat their Mongol enemies, or be destroyed

according to the decimal system.

These similarities effectively neutered the Mongols' advantages. But how did the Mamluks go one step further and turn this level playing field into a string of battlefield victories? One theory that's been advanced is that they enjoyed a crucial advantage in armaments. So should we imagine a Mamluk army furnished with immaculate arms and mounts – all supplied by Egypt's considerable commercial and agricultural wealth – out-performing Mongol warriors fighting with largely wooden weapons on smaller steppe ponies? Probably not. After all, during their decades-long wars of conquest, the Mongols had plenty of opportunity to loot or purchase the best weapons and mounts available.

A more plausible explanation for the Mamluks' triumphs is the "backs against the wall" phenomenon. They had no place of retreat. They had to win or they would be destroyed. Their forces were largely comprised of warriors who had fled to Egypt in search of refuge from the very armies they were now facing. They were ready to offer fierce resistance and would not go down without a fight.

Inevitable deaths

A crucial moment in this conflict occurred in 1260 when the Mamluks achieved their first victory over a Mongol army at a place called Ayn Jalut near Gaza. The battle was not an epic confrontation between rival empires. Most of the Mongol army had withdrawn to the east on hearing news of the Great Khan's death, leaving a small force to hold Syria. With both armies roughly matched in terms of numbers, the Mamluks were able to drive back their Mongol opponents, whose leader apparently sought to rally his troops with the words: "Death is inevitable. It is better to die with a good name than to flee in disgrace."

In a sense, Ayn Jalut was not especially important – the Mamluks had defeated a garrison of 20,000 men, so the vast majority of the Mongol army remained at large. But, in other ways, the victory was a game-changer: it enabled the Mamluks to claim all the

Winning weapons?
Mamluk warriors in a 14th-century cavalry training manual. One theory argues that their weaponry gave the Mamluks an advantage over their Mongol foes

territory conquered by the Mongols in Syria, dramatically expanding their empire. Even more importantly, it established a template for defeating the Mongol raiders, proving that they were far from invincible. This fact alone turned the Mamluk empire into a magnet for anyone who wanted to resist the Mongol invasions.

The Mongols would have to endure a long wait before getting the opportunity to exact revenge on the Mamluks – a series of civil wars leading to the break-up of the empire delayed their return to the near east. By the time they renewed their assault in 1280–81, two decades had elapsed since the debacle of Ayn Jalut – and the Mamluks were ready and waiting. In the intervening 20 years, the sultanate had trained their troops intensively, attracted warriors fleeing the Mongols, built fortresses and established lines of communication. The result was another victory over the Mongols – at the battle of Homs on 29 October 1281 – a triumph that hinged on a devastating cavalry charge into the Mongol centre. This time the Mamluks defeated a Mongol army at full strength.

Running on empty

The Mongols' clashes with the Mamluks weren't entirely fruitless. They did manage one battlefield victory – at Wadi al-Khaznadar near Damascus in 1299 – but even then they were unable to exploit their success, withdrawing from Syria shortly afterwards. And the reason? That was, as one commentator linked to the Knights Templar put it, a "dearth of fodder".

Mongol armies were invariably accompanied by huge herds of horses, sheep and goats, which they required for both cavalry mounts and food. These animals needed vast areas of grazing land for their survival. But, while the central Asian grasslands could provide sustenance on this scale, this was simply not the case in other regions.

The deciduous forests of eastern Europe offered comparatively little food for grazing herds, as did the tropical forests of south-east Asia. In the near east, there were some good grazing areas, especially in Anatolia (modern-day Turkey), the Nile delta and the Levantine coastlands. However, overall, the available pasturage here was patchy, a problem compounded by pack animals' aversion to the heat.

This weak-spot had not been lost on Carpini. He counselled a scorched-earth approach to any Mongol invasion, involving the destruction of all available fodder along their line of march. Carpini reasoned that, if you could starve the Mongols' animals, then their armies would cease to function. The Mamluks reached similar conclusions and burned the pasturelands along their frontiers. It's unclear how effective this tactic proved in forcing the Mongols to withdraw from Syria, but it certainly seems to have been a factor.

For all the Mamluks' successes, there's no denying the effectiveness of the Mongol armies. When they were unified, marching across favourable terrain and facing enemies vulnerable to their warcraft, they were irresistible. As their extraordinary wars of conquest in the 13th century prove, they learned to tackle major cities and fortresses very effectively. They also knew the value of terror as a weapon in war – some of their opponents were so riddled with fear that they were already half-defeated even before the Mongol army came into sight.

As it turned out, Christendom's armies never had to face such terrors in the late 1240s. Despite Carpini's dire predictions, an outbreak of civil wars across the Mongol empire meant that Europe was spared the second large-scale invasion that he so feared.

We'll never know what would have happened had the invasion gone ahead. Even if they had defeated Christendom's armies, the Mongols might have struggled to penetrate far into its deep forests. As Carpini suspected, the Mongols found campaigns against highly motivated, well-equipped enemies fighting in a similar style to themselves on unfavourable terrain a mighty challenge. And, when confronted by the Mamluks, it was a challenge that they couldn't surmount. H

Carpini counselled a scorched-earth policy, involving the destruction of all fodder along the Mongols' line of march

Dr Nicholas Morton is senior lecturer in the School of Arts & Humanities at Nottingham Trent University. His forthcoming book, *The Mongol Storm: Making and Breaking Empires in the Medieval Near East*, will be published by John Murray Press in October

LISTEN Melvyn Bragg and guests discussed the Mamluks on an episode of BBC Radio 4's **In Our Time**. Listen here: *bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b03bfmlh*

BBC RADIO 4

AKG IMAGES

TRY 3 ISSUES FOR £5

when you subscribe to BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE today!

BBC MADAM BUTTERFLY
STRAVINSKY
The Master of Ballet
How the Russian composer revolutionised music for the stage in 12 astounding works
BBC THE KING'S SINGERS
Let's sing for Christmas!
We celebrate the magic of the season with Worcester Cathedral Choir
BBC SCHUBERT'S WINTERREISE
Baritone Benjamin Appl sets out on music's bleakest journey
WEST SIDE STORY
We salute Spielberg's stunning new film
music
The world's best-selling classical music magazine
The power of Grieg
LISE DAVIDSEN
The Norwegian soprano on the irresistible allure of songs from home
Full January listings inside
Alexander Scriabin
Was he really Russian music's great eccentric?
Erwin Schulhoff
The tragic story of the jazz-loving Czech composer
Also in this issue!
Ethel Smyth's suffragette anthem
Sustainable instruments
Jaime Martín
Bibliotapes
The Mozartists
and much more...
100 reviews by the world's finest critics
Recordings & books – see p64
JANUARY 2022
£6.50
Stravinsk
The Rite of Spri
Petrushka
Berlioz
L'enfance du Christ
Parts I & II
Berlioz
L'enfance du Christ
Part III
THE BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE COLLECTION
VOL. 30 NO. 4
BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Singers, BBC Symphony Chorus, Karen Cargill (mezzo), Robert Murray (tenor), Etienne Dupuis (baritone), Matthew Rose (bass), Edward Gardner (conductor)
FREE CD!
SCRIABIN 150 YEARS
Scriabin
Piano works
Sonatas, Etudes & Preludes
Garrick Ohlsson, Alexander Gadjiev (piano)

- Receive your first 3 issues for only £5*
- After your trial, continue to save over 25% on the shop price when you pay by Direct Debit
- Build up a listening library with a complete work on each month's cover CD

SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT

www.buysubscriptions.com/MUHA22

☎ or call 03330 162 118† and quote ORDER CODE **MUHA22**

*This special introductory offer is available to new UK residents via Direct Debit only and is subject to availability. Offer ends 31st December 2022. The magazine used here is for illustrative purposes only, your subscription will start with the next available issue. After your first 3 issues, your subscription will continue at £25.49 every 6 issues thereafter, saving over 25% off the shop price. Full details of the Direct Debit guarantee are available upon request. †UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Mon to Fri 9am to 5pm.

Q&A

A selection of historical **conundrums** answered by experts

Why did the practice of laying foundation stones start?

O Adamberry, Gibraltar

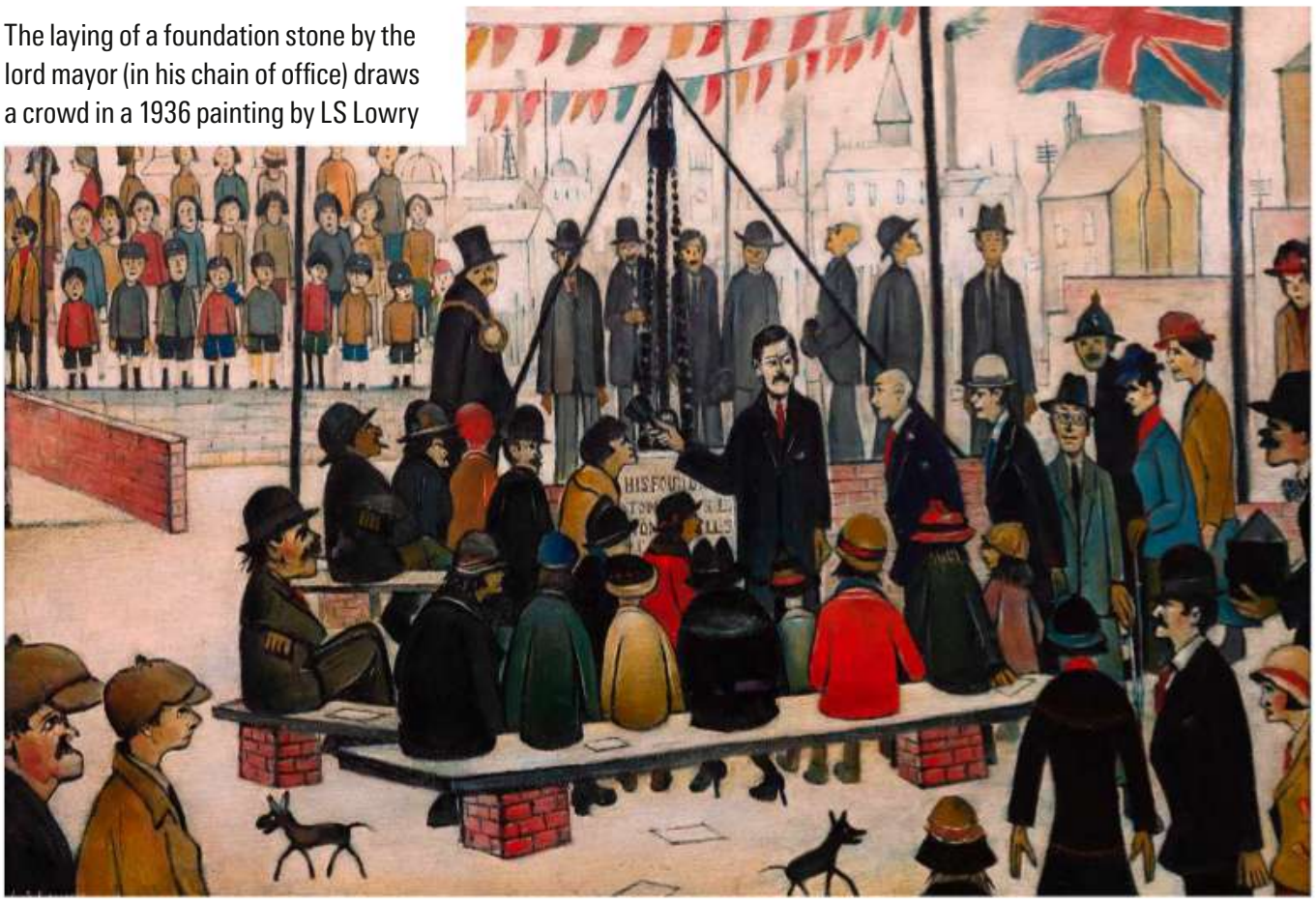
Foundation stones, or cornerstones, were the first stone placed at the base of a new structure being built and were used to determine its subsequent alignment and orientation. Positioning this stone to commence the construction of a grand building still takes place today, often celebrated by public ceremony, but derives from an ancient concept. Jesus Christ is metaphorically dubbed a "rejected" cornerstone of the Jewish faith in the New Testament (Mark 12:10).

Ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultures had commemorated the laying of initial building stones with accompanying "ground-breaking rituals" for centuries, to allow their gods to protect the new structures. These practices continued into medieval times, becoming inherent ceremonial rites of ecclesiastical constructions to secure God's eternal blessing of the church and its congregation. The cornerstone blessing of the abbey church of St Denis, Paris in 1140 saw numerous prelates assemble at the new choir's foundation trench to witness Louis VII lay the first stone and insert his ring into a mixture of consecrated water and mortar.

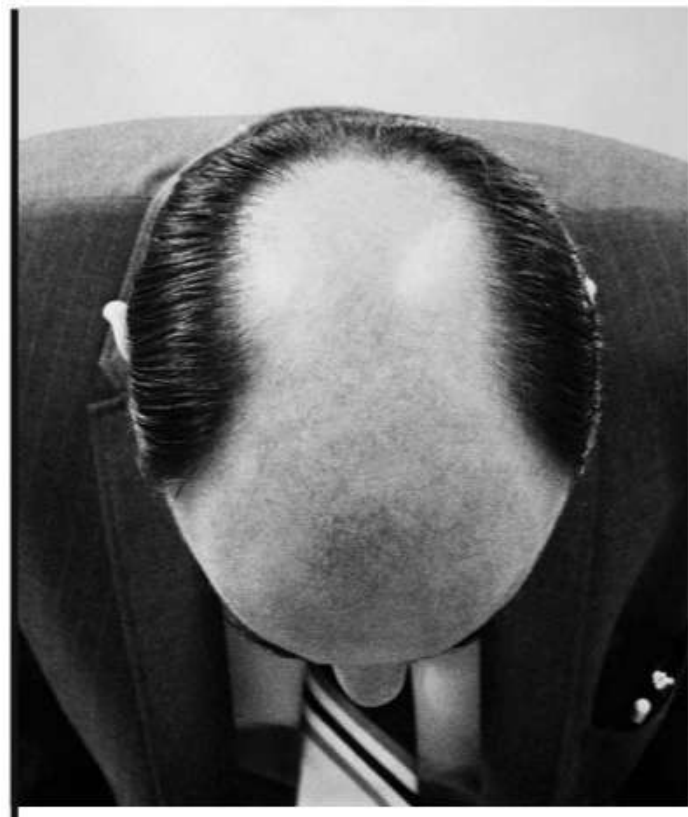
Votive or totemic deposits gifted by patrons or religious leaders were commonly interred within or near to cornerstones. These might include small vessels, animal bones, coins, wine, blood, or the relics of a patron saint.

To this day, ritual deposits – often documents or photographs – are still placed into many public buildings' foundations or inside metal receptacles before insertion within the construction. A prominent member of society (often a local celebrity or politician) then lays the initial stone with a ceremonial trowel. Nowadays the ritual is for publicity, not for divine protection.

Emma J Wells, architectural historian and buildings archaeologist



The laying of a foundation stone by the lord mayor (in his chain of office) draws a crowd in a 1936 painting by LS Lowry



Balding men, like the one pictured above in the 1960s, were often dubbed "Curly"

What are some of the most popular nicknames that aren't in vogue anymore?

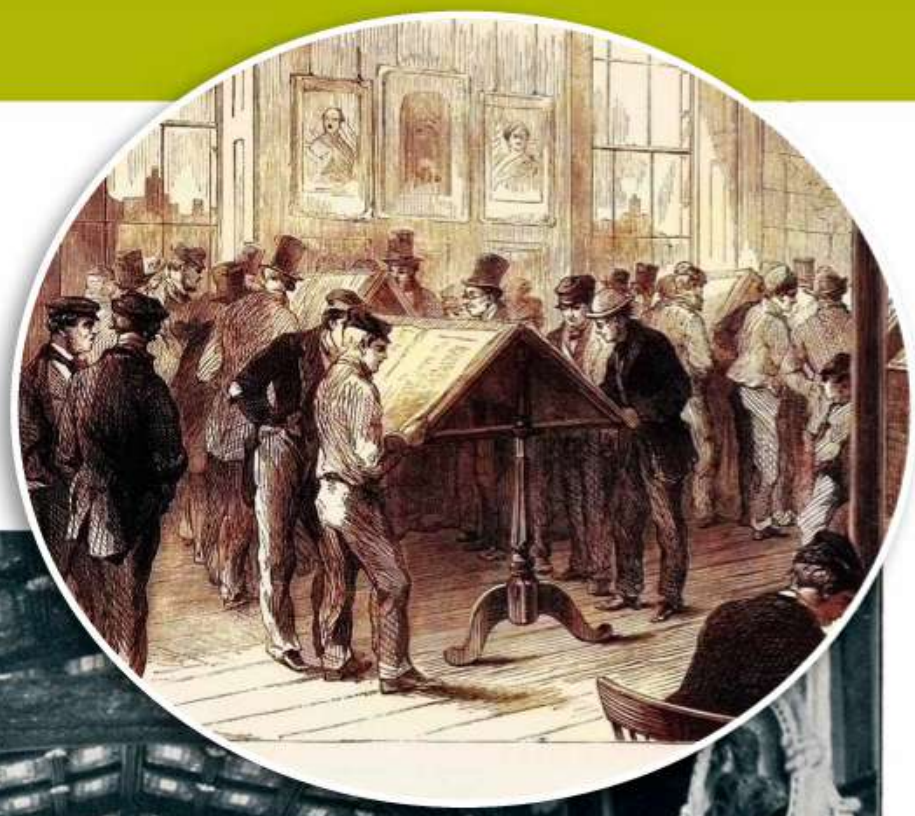
There were lots of medieval contractions and pet names for men, which aren't in common use any more, such as "Hob(b)" or "Dob(b)" for Robert, "Hick" for Richard, or "Filkin" for Philip. However, some shorter medieval women's names are still in use, including Tibby for Isabel, Alys for Alice, and so on.

Perhaps Britain's golden age of male nicknames was the 20th century, mostly the result of conscription. The military habit of ascribing nicknames to common surnames spilled over into civilian life, so every Mills became "Bomber", each White "Chalky", every Miller "Dusty" and every Smith a "Smudge" or "Smudger". There were also ironic names: a bald man would be "Curly" and a short one "Lofty".

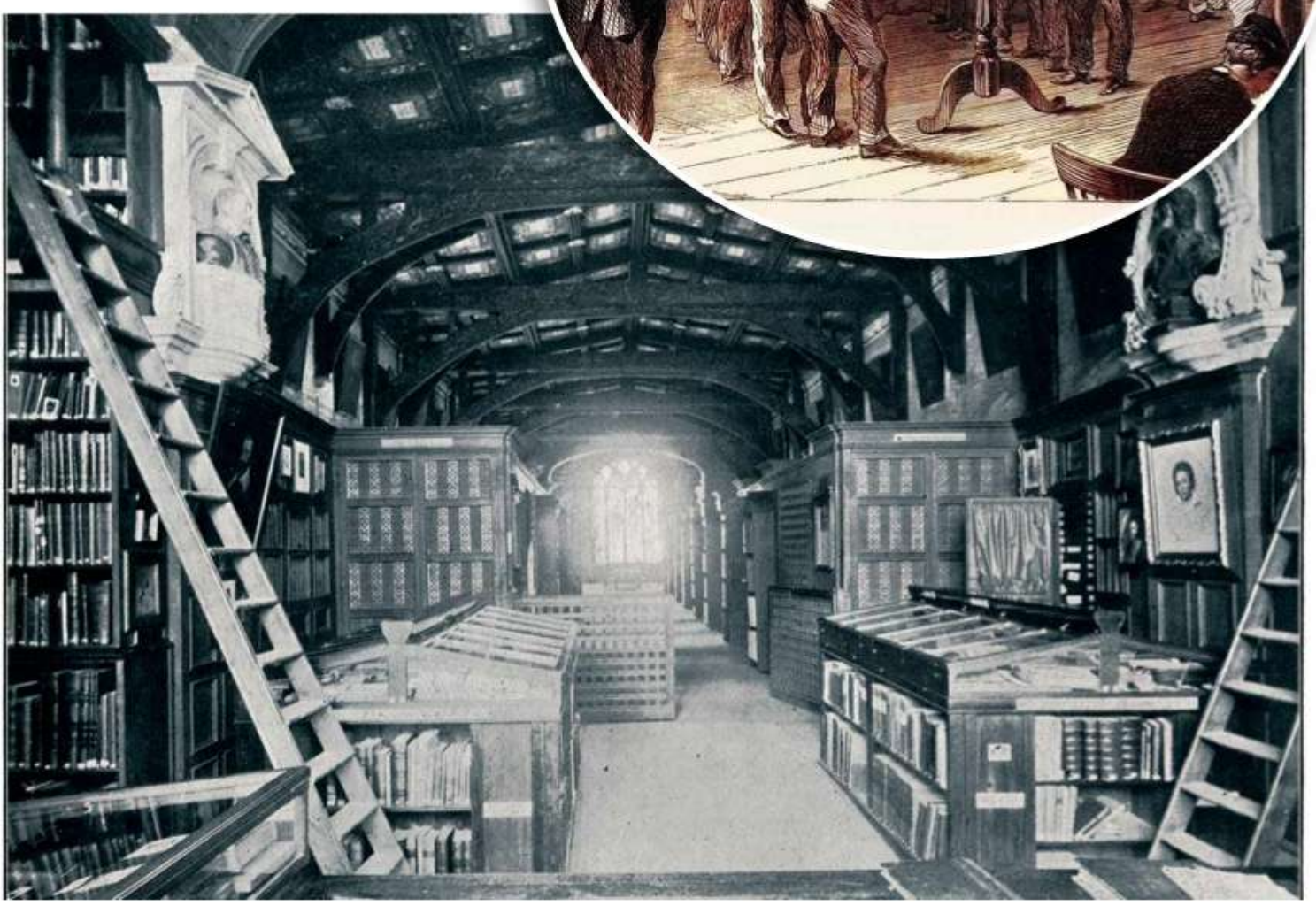
Many have fallen from use due to modern sensibilities, so, for example, the character Fatty in *The Beano*'s Bash Street Kids is now called Freddy.

Eugene Byrne, author and journalist specialising in history

ALAMY



RIGHT: Men gather to read the latest news in a Manchester public reading room in 1862
BELOW: Duke Humfrey's Library, the oldest reading room at the Bodleian



GETTY IMAGES/BRIDGEMAN

When was the first public library opened in Britain?

The first public library (as we understand the inclusive notion of "public" today), was the Manchester Free Public Library, established in 1852 following the passing of the Public Libraries Act two years earlier. This legislation gave local authorities the option to raise local taxes to fund local library provision, available to all. This was a bold step, but it would be more than a century for the law to make such provision a statutory duty for each local government, with the Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1964.

While the landscape for public education was transformed by the 1850 act, there had been many other forms of library provision available to various "publics" before then. The 18th and 19th centuries had seen the growth of literary and philosophical institutes in many towns, all with libraries, while subscriptions libraries and book clubs open to the less well-off flourished in the age of "self-improvement". Thanks to the provision of organisations such as mechanics' institutes or co-operative societies, working-class readers had access to reading rooms.

From the mid-16th century, many parishes had libraries in churches or separate buildings that could be accessed by local parishioners, although this was often with many restrictions. The Bodleian Library in Oxford can lay claim to being the first library in Britain purposefully open to what its founder, Sir Thomas Bodley, called the "whole republic of the learned". From 1602, readers from all over the country, and Europe, came to access its fast-growing collections, but the access they enjoyed did not extend to our present notion of "the public", as it was limited to male scholars.

Richard Ovenden, professorial fellow at the University of Oxford and Bodley's Librarian

DID YOU KNOW...?

Naked gun

When, in 1806, the MP for Evesham, Humphrey Howarth, quarrelled with the Earl of Barrymore and agreed to fight a duel, he prepared by stripping down to his underpants. Howarth claimed that he did not want bits of cloth entering any wound he might receive, and so risk infection. As for Barrymore, he was taken aback to see his opponent in nothing but his "drawers" and, according to some accounts, withdrew, all-too aware that exchanging pistol shots with a nearly nude man was ridiculous.

Death of a sports star

A Welsh rugby international met an unfortunate end after being shot by a poisoned arrow. Born in 1870, Norman Biggs was the youngest man to play for Wales when he won his first cap aged 18 – a record that stood until 2010. After retiring from rugby, he became a superintendent of colonial police in Nigeria. During a skirmish with villagers in 1908, he was wounded by the poisoned projectile and died four days later.

Ivory on the ice

In 1814, an elephant crossed the Thames without being in a boat or getting its feet wet. Several times between the 17th and 19th centuries, London's river froze sufficiently that frost fairs could be held on the ice. The last of these was in 1814 when stalls were set up, selling food and drink, and whole oxen were roasted on roaring fires. Dances were held on the ice, which was a few feet thick in places, and an elephant was taken for a walk near Blackfriars Bridge. H

Nick Rennison, writer and journalist specialising in history

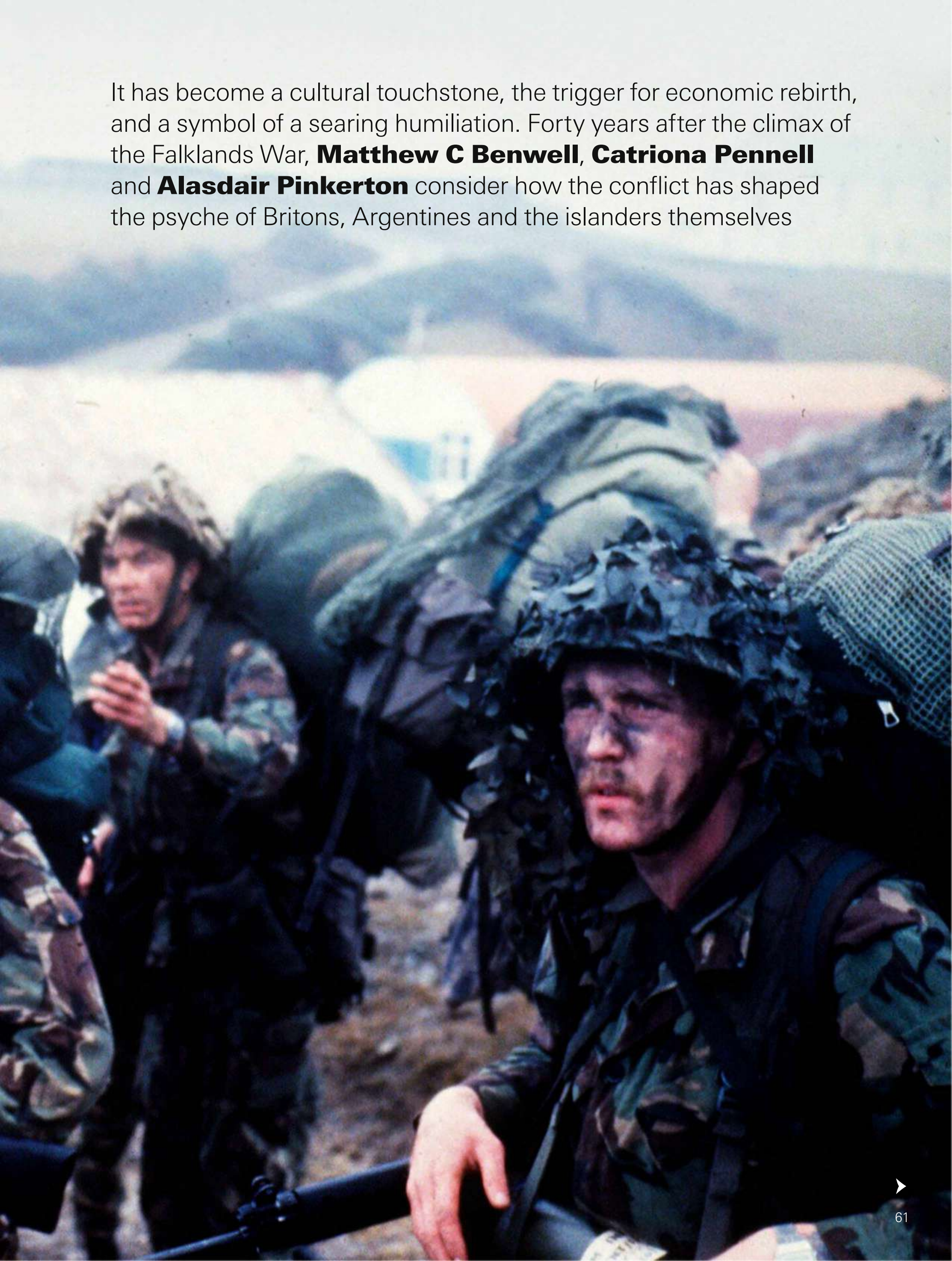
ILLUSTRATION BY **@GLENMCILLUSTRATION**

The long shadow of the Falklands War

Battle-ready
British troops at San Carlos, East Falkland, 1982. Four decades after its conclusion, the Falklands War remains a source of deep tension between Britain and Argentina

SHUTTERSTOCK

It has become a cultural touchstone, the trigger for economic rebirth, and a symbol of a searing humiliation. Forty years after the climax of the Falklands War, **Matthew C Benwell**, **Catriona Pennell** and **Alasdair Pinkerton** consider how the conflict has shaped the psyche of Britons, Argentines and the islanders themselves



IN CONTEXT

THE FALKLANDS WAR

On 3 April 1982, Margaret Thatcher stood before the House of Commons – its first meeting on a Saturday for 25 years – and announced that Argentina had seized the Falkland Islands.

A day earlier, Argentine forces – on the orders of a notorious and increasingly unpopular military junta – had launched an amphibious assault that rapidly overwhelmed a small garrison of Royal Marines and volunteers of the Falkland Islands Defence Force.

In response, Margaret Thatcher ordered a task force to set sail for the south-west Atlantic, despite the misgivings of several members of her cabinet.

As that task force assembled at its destination, numerous flashpoints erupted between the British and Argentine forces in the skies above and waters surrounding the Falkland Islands. These led to casualties on both sides, including the sinking of several Royal Navy ships and – perhaps most controversially, given its position outside the British-enforced exclusion zone around the islands – the sinking of the Argentine light cruiser the *General Belgrano*, with the loss of 323 lives.

British forces launched a perilous amphibious landing on 21 May on the beaches around San Carlos Water, a bay that became known as Bomb Alley due to the frequent bombing runs conducted by low-flying aircraft piloted by highly skilled Argentine officers.

Once ashore, the British engaged the enemy in land battles across the islands, at places such as Goose Green – arguably most famous for the death of Lieutenant Colonel H Jones while leading an attack on enemy positions – and summits around the islands' capital, Stanley.

With the British closing in on the capital, Argentine forces surrendered on 14 June 1982, now known in the Falklands as "Liberation Day".

The battle to reclaim the Falklands had exacted a heavy price: 649 Argentine dead, along with 255 British military personnel and three civilians from the Falklands. Yet the suffering didn't end there: the conflict's psychological toll continues to be felt by veterans, their families and Falkland Islanders to this day. And, as the three boxes on these pages show, the war has shaped the trajectory of Britain, Argentina and the Falklands Islands over the past four decades – in very different ways.

Innocent victim
The funeral of one of the civilians killed by a shell in Stanley, June 1982. In the aftermath of the war, islanders' celebrations were tempered by trauma

A bright future
The Falkand Islands capital, Stanley. Victory in the Falklands War reversed years of economic and demographic stagnation

The islanders' brave new world

For all its horrors, the war triggered an extraordinary turnaround in the Falklands' economic and political fortunes

On the final days of the Falklands War, a shell slammed into a house during the Royal Navy's bombardment of Argentine positions around Stanley in advance of the British assault on the capital. For the families sheltering inside, the results were catastrophic. Doreen Bonner and Sue Whitley, a domestic science teacher originally from Wales, were killed instantly. Mary Goodwin, 81, died shortly afterwards. Having struggled to recover from the shock of his wife's death, Harry Bonner died on New Year's Eve 1982 – a fourth, albeit unofficial, civilian casualty of the war.

For Falkland Islanders, the British military victory in the south Atlantic in June 1982 represented freedom and liberation from an occupying force. The 14th June is now celebrated as much as it is commemorated as "Liberation Day". But as the fate of Harry and Doreen Bonner, Sue Whitley and Mary Goodman prove, this was a liberation that came at a cost.

In the days and months that followed the Argentine surrender, any sense of celebration was muted, initially perhaps by the enormity of the experience that islanders had endured, the scale of the rebuilding effort that was now required, and the material impacts of war. In his book *Eyewitness Falklands* (1982), the BBC radio journalist Robert Fox reported a conversation with fellow broadcaster Patrick Watts, in which the latter expressed the dislocation felt by many islanders after the war. "We've still got freedom, but I think we've lost the peace of these islands," Watts said. "Maybe I'll have to look for another place to find the peace that I've always enjoyed here."

When the exiled governor, Rex Hunt, returned to the islands in July 1982, he observed the initial widespread reluctance of people to talk about their experiences. "For a good year after the war, the Stanley folk did not want to talk about it," Hunt later recalled in his autobiography. "For the second year they talked of little else. By the third year they were beginning to look ahead."

By 1985, for the first time in generations, the Falkland Islanders had good reasons to contemplate a more certain and prosperous future.

Before the war there were genuine, existential fears for the future of the Falkland Islands' community. Years of economic and demographic stagnation had, infamously, prompted the Foreign Office and the British government to explore the gradual transfer of sovereignty to Argentina via "leaseback".

The war changed all that. The Thatcher government, buoyed by nationalist sentiment at home and new strategic imperatives in the south Atlantic, implemented a raft of policies that would transform the islands. It accelerated land reforms, introduced a new constitution and local self-government, granted increased levels of direct aid, rebuilt Stanley airfield and constructed an entirely new RAF base at Mount Pleasant.

By 1986, the islands were reaping the benefits of an extensive and exclusive fisheries zone. This allowed them to issue licences, thereby creating an entirely new and highly lucrative pillar for the islands' economy.

Today, that economy, when measured on a per capita basis, significantly outstrips the United Kingdom and is broadly on par with Switzerland or Norway – an extraordinary reversal of fortunes.

The British government, buoyed by nationalist sentiment and new strategic imperatives, implemented a raft of policies that would transform the islands

GETTY IMAGES/PA IMAGES/REUTERS

Walking the world stage

In their diplomatic relations, too, the Falklands have grown in self-confidence. Eschewing suggestions of a pre-1982 "colonial relationship" with the UK, Falkland Islanders now walk the world stage and represent themselves and their own national interests at the United Nations.

During the premiership of Cristina Kirchner, Argentina began reasserting its sovereignty claims (a process that peaked with the 30th anniversary year in 2012). In response, the Falkland Islands Government held a referendum – complete with an international monitoring mission to increase international acceptance – on the question of the islands' sovereignty. The result was overwhelming: all but three voters (99.8 per cent) elected to remain a British Overseas Territory.

In this, the 40th anniversary year of the conflict, the Falklands finds itself in the position of both looking back and looking forward. This is not, in itself, an unusual position for a nation engaged in a significant anniversary. However, for the islanders, this means looking back to a brutal "colonial war" that they wish to remember and to commemorate, but which they are increasingly reluctant to be defined by.

Red, white and blue
Stanley residents commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Argentine surrender, 2007. Six years later, 99.8 per cent of islanders voted to remain a British Overseas Territory

Cries for the missing
Mothers of victims of the military junta remonstrate with police in Buenos Aires, 1982. By the time the Falklands War erupted, the dictatorship's brutality had already alienated many Argentines

ARGENTINA

Defiance in defeat

The events of 1982 left deep scars but opposition to the "illegal occupation" of the Falklands continues to unite Argentines

In 1983, the infamous military junta that had ruled Argentina since 1976 was swept from power. Defeat in the Falklands is often framed as the event that finally sealed the dictatorship's demise but, in reality, resistance to military rule had been building for several years. The wave of euphoria that greeted Argentina's "recuperation" of the Malvinas (Falkand Islands) in April 1982 ultimately did little to reverse public discontent with the junta.

Initially, the memory of the war – and its embodiment in the form of soldiers returning from the theatre of conflict – was largely concealed, hidden away in military barracks far from the public eye. This response was particularly harmful to the soldiers themselves, many of whom were conscripts with limited military training. Marco, from Santa Fe province in the north-east of Argentina, was one of the many young conscripts trying to reintegrate into everyday life after the war: "At that time the war wasn't talked about," he recalled. "It was as if what we had done had no value."

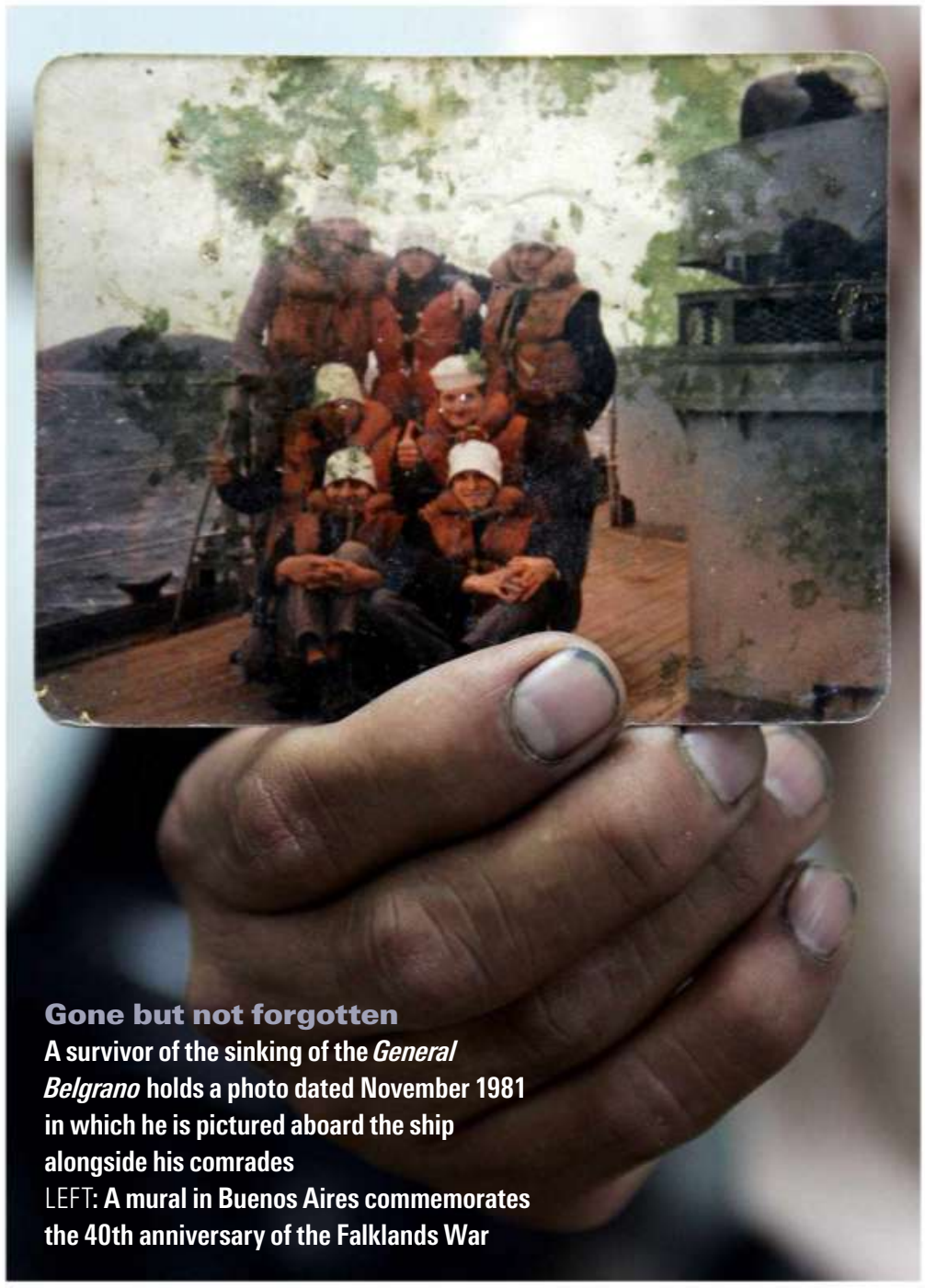
Other soldiers faced difficulties finding employment and were stigmatised as "crazy" as a result of their experiences in the war. The psychological traumas they suffered were only exacerbated by this silencing and sense of isolation, and some took their own lives in the following years.

The deep national scars associated with this military loss were set alongside the legacies of a brutal military dictatorship that had been responsible for the disappearance of an estimated 30,000 people in an infamous "dirty war" waged from 1976–83.

In the 1980s and 90s, respective democratic governments had to negotiate a way forward that reduced the influence of the traditionally powerful armed forces on public and political life, while acknowledging and commemorating the military's role in the 1982 war. This dilemma made it difficult to keep everyone happy – some sectors of the military and veterans of the war accused the government of selling them out, or what they called "desmalvinisation".

For Andrés, a military officer in 1982, the hardest thing to take was "the ingratitude, the desmalvinisation and the non-recogni-

National pride A military reservist sings the Argentine national anthem, April 1982. The euphoria that accompanied the invasion of the Falklands was short-lived



Gone but not forgotten
A survivor of the sinking of the *General Belgrano* holds a photo dated November 1981 in which he is pictured aboard the ship alongside his comrades
LEFT: A mural in Buenos Aires commemorates the 40th anniversary of the Falklands War

tion of everything done there in the Malvinas. That did hurt me, it hurt me a lot."

Sovereign disputes

Territorial nationalism linked to Argentina's claim over the Malvinas had become increasingly visible throughout the 20th century through educational curricula and national maps that included territories subject to sovereignty disputes (including, of course, the south-west Atlantic and Antarctica).

References to the islands in public life only increased in the aftermath of the 1982 war via reproductions of the outline of the Malvinas on commemorative monuments, banners at football matches, graffiti and more recently on school uniforms and credit cards.

From 2003–15, Argentina's claim to the Malvinas gathered yet more momentum during the administrations of Néstor Kirchner and his wife Cristina, who was dubbed the "Iron Lady of the Malvinas".

The Kirchners' campaigning had particular resonance in communities in the south of the country, where anniversaries of the war still revive memories of intensive military mobilisations, as well as drills simulating British air raids on Argentine military bases. However, the Falklands War doesn't only loom large in the consciousness of Argentines who lived near the conflict zone. From commemorative parades to vigils paying tribute to those who fought the British, the conflict is highly visible in villages, towns and cities across the entire nation.

Today, schoolchildren all over Argentina mark the anniversary of the war with rousing renditions of the "March of the Malvinas" that "honours our emblem of national pride", laments the "lost southern pearl" while proclaiming, "Las Malvinas, Argentinas".

Successive democratic administrations had to find a way forward that reduced the armed forces' influence while acknowledging their role in the Falklands War

Galvanising effect

It is said, anecdotally, that few issues are able to unite Argentines as a nation, but the Malvinas and the national football team are two exceptions. To prove the point, the start of the 40th anniversary year saw Argentina's government launch its "Agenda Malvinas 40 años" (Malvinas 40 Years Agenda) under the slogan: "Malvinas unites us."

Emboldened by perceptions in some quarters of waning British geopolitical influence, Argentina views the 2022 anniversary as an opportunity to reinvigorate its sovereignty claim to the islands. This year will witness a multitude of commemorative events in which everyone from artists and academics to politicians and musicians will reflect on the memory of the 1982 war and what it means for the nation today.

The chances of these commemorations striking a reconciliatory tone appear remote, given the ongoing spectre of the sovereignty dispute. The Falklands War may have been fought 40 years ago, but Argentina's desire to end the UK's "illegal occupation" of the Islas Malvinas burns undimmed.

GETTY IMAGES

A fond farewell
Onlookers watch HMS *Invincible* depart Portsmouth for the south Atlantic. The Falklands War triggered a surge in patriotism

UNITED KINGDOM

In thrall to a "noble crusade"

Why British prime ministers over the past four decades have sought to replicate Margaret Thatcher's "Falklands moment"

On 26 July 1982, the British government held a memorial service at St Paul's Cathedral for the families of servicemen who had died in the Falklands War. It had not been a straightforward event to organise. The government was focused firmly on celebrating victory, affirming to the families that their loved one's sacrifice had been worthwhile. The church, however, wanted to express regret not just for the 255 British troops who had died in uniform but for the war as a whole. For the church, the service was a chance to signify a sense of reconciliation with Argentina.

Unsurprisingly, the service ended up being a compromise. Although no sermons were read in Spanish, as the dean had wanted, the archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie (who had served in Normandy during the Second World War), praised the courage of the British Task Force, described war as "a sign of human failure", and reminded his congregation to pray for both the British and Argentine dead. "The boss is absolutely livid," Denis Thatcher was quoted as telling members of the 2nd Battalion, Parachute Regiment afterwards.

At the time, the Falklands War signified a moment of triumph in a period when Britain was overshadowed by a toxic mix of economic failure, high unemployment and a sense of permanent "decline".

Victory in the south Atlantic on 14 June demonstrated that Britain still had the capacity to bring a war to an emphatic conclusion. Just as significantly, it transformed Margaret Thatcher's premiership, turning her into a global celebrity. Her critics becalmed, she now revelled in her newfound reputation as a decisive leader.

Newly emboldened, she pushed forward with what came to be known as "Thatcherism". Constantly citing "the Falklands spirit", she tackled the miners, savaged the Greater London Council and took on the IRA.

Yet, as the St Paul's ceremony on 26 July highlights, not everyone shared her sense of achievement. *The Falklands Play*, a drama commissioned by the BBC in 1983 (starring Patricia Hodge as Margaret Thatcher) was shelved due to its pro-Thatcher stance and allegedly jingoistic tone. A public row over press bias and censorship ensued. It was broadcast on BBC Four and BBC Radio 4 on the 20th anniversary of the war in 2002, with reviews remarking that Thatcher was portrayed as "a great heroic figure".

Conflicts of choice

"The significance of the Falklands War was enormous, both for Britain's self-confidence and for our standing in the world," wrote Margaret Thatcher in her 1993 book *The Downing Street Years*. "Since the Suez fiasco in 1956, British foreign policy had been one long retreat. Victory in the Falklands changed that."

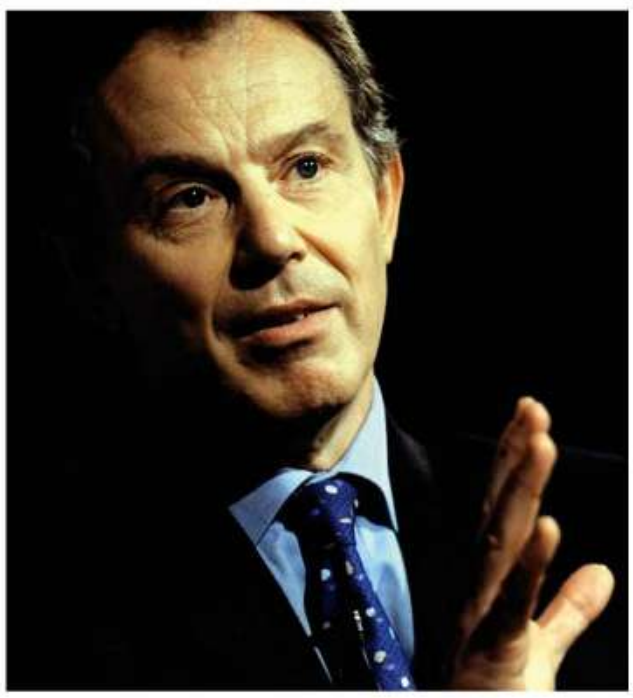
There's little doubt that the war ended a long period of post-imperial decline in British foreign policy. Instead of the conflict being an expression of what Britain *was* (a nation still trading on the glories of the Second World War 37 years earlier), it became the reference point of what Britain *was to be*. Thatcher's successors in 10 Downing Street were to become self-styled globalists, ready to

Margaret Thatcher's successors became globalists. They sent troops to fight overseas, supported by a defence budget that covered a "Falklands eventuality"

Moment of triumph
The Falklands War transformed Margaret Thatcher's fortunes, giving her the political capital to take on the miners and confront the IRA

SHUTTERSTOCK

Flying the flag The "Yomper" image (above) was employed as a symbol of the troops' heroism and resilience



War leaders In the wake of the Falklands War, prime ministers such as Tony Blair (above) felt emboldened to send Britons into battle overseas

undertake so-called wars of choice. The likes of Tony Blair and David Cameron would send British troops to fight overseas, supported by a defence budget that covered a "Falklands eventuality".

Then there's the "Falklands Moment". Every prime minister since Margaret Thatcher has been judged by one of these. In fact, it could be argued that Boris Johnson has been confronted by two: the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian War.

The iconic Yomper

Across Britain, the Falklands War triggered a surge of patriotism – fanned by a popular press whose coverage of the conflict (most notably following the sinking of the *Belgrano*) shaded, some argued, into ugly triumphalism. For two months, the war was the single main news story in the British media. Newspapers regularly devoted whole sections to the conflict.

GETTY IMAGES

Images were central to communicating an allegiance to Britain's cause, often by emphasising the heroism and resilience of British troops. The most iconic of these was the "Yomper" (shown left) – a spontaneous photograph of 24-year-old Corporal Peter Robinson with a Union Jack in his backpack as the Royal Marines "yomped" along Moody Brook track towards Stanley in June 1982. The image inspired a statue, unveiled by Margaret Thatcher on the war's 10th anniversary in July 1992, which stands outside the entrance of the Royal Marines Museum in Portsmouth. Facing forward and staring determinedly into the distance, the Yomper symbolises determination and courage in wartime; both of the nation and of the individual combatant.

Like Dunkirk and the Blitz, the Falklands War has become a cultural touchstone in the British media; a form of shorthand to exhort the population to retain faith in the nation and show unity in the face of foreign (or domestic) threats.

This was particularly evident during the war's 30th anniversary commemorations in 2012. At a time when Argentina was ratcheting up its sovereignty claims on the islands, Britain was in the grips of austerity and its armed forces embroiled in conflict in the Middle East, the memory of the Falklands' "noble crusade" served to restore confidence in the nation's civil and military institutions.

Ten years later, and the landscape is equally uncertain. Britain is experiencing fresh waves of economic turbulence and is wracked by growing political and cultural divisions – all while attempting to come to terms with Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Set against this backdrop, commemorations of the Falklands War this year will remain an important reference point for those seeking to foster national cohesion and regenerate a sense of national pride in Britain. H

Matthew C Benwell is senior lecturer in human geography at Newcastle University, **Catriona Pennell** is professor of modern history and memory studies at the University of Exeter and **Alasdair Pinkerton** is a reader in geopolitics at Royal Holloway, University of London

LISTEN For more on the war and its aftermath, listen to an episode of our **Everything You Wanted to Know** podcast series on the Falklands conflict: *falklands-war-podcast*

WATCH The BBC Two documentary **Falklands: The Frontline Story** (now on iPlayer) contains first-hand accounts of those who fought in and witnessed the Falklands War

BBC TWO

Young people from all backgrounds can enter a competition to win a trip to the south Atlantic

STUDENT COMPETITION

The Falklands Forty Schools Competition wants to hear from young people about what the islands mean to them today

The authors of this piece are collaborating with the Falkland Islands Government to run a competition for British students (aged 16–18 years old) to submit creative stories (in written, audio or visual format) about the islands and what they mean to them in the 21st century.

The competition is part of the 40th anniversary commemorations of the Falklands War. **Eight winners will receive an all-expenses escorted tour of the Falkland Islands in February 2023.**

The Falklands Forty Schools Competition is open to young people from all backgrounds, attending different types of schools from across the UK.

More information can be found at *falklands40comp.co.uk.* You'll also find details on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook: *@Falklands40Comp.* The competition closes on 31 July 2022. Promoter: Falkland Islands Government.

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

Save when you subscribe to the digital edition

ELIZABETH'S GREATEST RIVAL?
Why Catherine de Medici enraged the Virgin Queen
HISTORY
HADRIAN'S WALL SPECIAL
BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING HISTORY MAGAZINE
ROME'S BATTLE FOR BRITAIN
The bloody road from Caesar's invasion to the building of Hadrian's Wall
Women on the wall: Everyday life at the frontiers of empire
Roman tourist trap: Why ancient visitors flocked to the wall
How to stop a Mongol invas
The secrets to defeating the medieval superpower
Storming Normans
The unstoppable rise of England's conquerors
Nixon in China
The encounter that stunned the world
DIGGIN VICTO
Britain's battle against sta
NEW LIGHT ON THE DARK AGES
MICHAEL WOOD ON ENGLAND AFTER THE ROMANS
STORY MAGAZINE
A'S DOOMED LUTION
At home with the Stuarts
Explore the dynasty's grandest royal residences
TUDOR KINGMAKERS
HISTORY
The Persians
The rise of the ancient world's first great empire

Enjoy our Premium App experience now available from

GET IT ON Google play

zinio™

amazon apps Available on kindle fire

Download on the App Store

BBC History Magazine is Britain's bestselling history magazine. We feature leading historians writing lively and thought-provoking new takes on the great events of the past.

How to repel a
MONGOL INVASION
They swept across Asia with terrifying efficiency. Yet, as 13th-century Europe quaked at the prospect of a Mongol invasion, there was an empire that, as Nicholas Morton writes, learned to beat the invaders at their own game
HISTORY
ROME'S BATTLE FOR BRITAIN
How to stop a Mongol invasion

Enjoy our Premium App experience now available from

GET IT ON Google play

zinio™

amazon apps Available on kindle fire

Download on the App Store

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

BBC at 100 PART 8

How soap saved the BBC

In the 1980s, the BBC devised a new weapon in its ratings battle against ITV: *EastEnders*. **DAVID HENDY** explores how a mix of masterful publicity and melodramatic plots propelled the drama to popular success

ON THE E PODCAST

Soap superstars
EastEnders' mix of familiar soap plots and contemporary social issues made its cast – which included Bill Treacher and Susan Tully (top) and Nick Berry and Tom Watt (below) – household names in the 1980s

> "*EastEnders* added to the familiar mix of soap-opera elements a touch of the 'Blitz spirit' and storylines which tackled pressing social issues"

One of the most unlikely episodes in British television history unfolded on an isolated Devon hillside one evening in September 1986. It was then that around 60 inmates at Dartmoor prison, who had been spending "free association" watching the BBC's hit drama serial *EastEnders*, started rioting. Chairs and tables were broken up, and lightbulbs smashed. Afterwards, officials launched an urgent investigation. Had the poor quality of food just served for supper triggered the outburst? Not, it seemed, in this case. It had been TV – or rather, its temporary absence – that had apparently caused the fracas.

On the night in question, *EastEnders* had featured one of the main characters, the teenage mother Michelle Fowler, jilt her sweetheart, Lofty, at the altar and declare her love instead for the father of her baby: the landlord of the Queen Vic pub, "Dirty Den" Watts. In soap-opera terms, it was a classic moment of high drama, and around 20 million Britons – roughly half the adult population of the entire country – had tuned in. At the crucial moment, all reception in Dartmoor Prison had been lost – the latest in a growing list of reception failures at the institution. By the time the picture returned to normal, all the inmates could see was Lofty crying alone in his bedsit.

In less than two years after its February 1985 launch, *EastEnders* had become compulsive viewing. Indeed, it had been designed by the BBC with this goal in mind – conceived as a finely honed weapon in an ongoing TV ratings war that the corporation desperately needed to win.

The broadcaster had been doing reasonably well when it came to peak-time programmes. Its evening schedule featured, among other hits, *Dynasty*, *Top of the Pops*, *The Generation Game*, *'Allo 'Allo!*, *Only Fools and Horses*, *Blackadder* and *The Young Ones*. Yet by 1983, ITV seemed to be doing even better. While the BBC's licence fee income was stagnant, advertising revenues for the regional commercial companies were buoyant, and they had used their wealth to splash out on big, audience-friendly series for the most lucrative mid-evening slots. The BBC was also being held back by programme starting times. Although it did not carry advertising itself, many of its series were being sold abroad and had to be made the right length for networks that did. This meant a steady stream of programmes about 25 minutes or 50 minutes in length, leaving the poor British viewer with an untidy schedule that was almost impossible to follow. ITV's programmes, which started on the hour or the half hour, were much easier to grasp.

The result of all this in ratings terms was that five of the top six series were now ITV's. It was a dangerous position for the BBC to find itself in. It might not be obliged to think only of ratings – but if its audience share ever dipped below something like 30 per cent, life could become politically very difficult. How could the corporation carry on justifying a universal licence fee if a growing portion of the public were no longer using its services? A new peak-time soap opera – something that could perhaps take on ITV's hugely popular *Coronation Street* – presented itself as the obvious solution: a programme that would have as its prime objective the maintenance of audience share.

A window on society

The idea of the BBC broadcasting a soap opera – or, to use the BBC's preferred term, a "popular drama serial" – was neither new nor revolutionary. As was often the case, radio had led the way. The corporation's wartime North American Service had featured *Front Line Family*, the ongoing story of the Robinson family's gutsy determination to endure bombing, blackout and rationing. Its producers had worked on the basis of a simple rule of thumb: "British in content, American in appeal," and *Front Line Family's*

BBC ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

Neighbourhood watch
Cast and crew filming an episode of *EastEnders* in 1998. Decades on from its first broadcast, the soap remains a fixture of the BBC's schedules

15-minute episodes, beamed across the Atlantic every weekday, had provided US and Canadian listeners with what one critic called the "refreshing sea-breeze of strength and determination".

In the decades since, two other radio serials had successfully woven their way into Britain's own national culture: *The Archers* and *Mrs Dale's Diary*. Val Gielgud, the BBC's long-serving head of Radio Drama, loathed them both. *Mrs Dale's Diary*, in particular, he dismissed as "sociologically corrupting" because it encouraged what he saw as a "mediocrity of mind" among listeners. He also thought the standardised "production line" approach that such serials required, with staff asked to make essentially the same programme week after week, year after year, was inimicalto good morale and the overall quality of the BBC's drama output.

Yet Gielgud failed to acknowledge their ability to dramatise very real social problems. *Mrs Dale's Diary*, for instance, grappled throughout the 1950s and 1960s with many of the issues that millions of women listening at home would have recognised: the conflict between the demands of home-making and the desire to go out to work, the pressures of motherhood, failing marriages. But, as with *The Archers*, the overall tone was certainly one of cosiness and respectability. And when BBC Television dipped a very tentative toe into the same brew in 1954 with the launch of *The Grove Family*, the portrayal of life in their Hendon home had much the same feel.

EastEnders was designed to be altogether more gritty. And the high stakes involved meant that little was left to chance. Two existing TV drama series – *Triangle* and *Angels* – were axed so that a ring-fenced budget of more than £1.6m could be deployed on a dedicated set in Elstree. New directors were hand-picked from London's top theatres. Casting, rehearsals and scriptwriting went on for months, and a full-time producer and scriptwriter were recruited: Julia Smith and Tony Holland, who had worked on *Z Cars* together.

EastEnders' creators Julia Smith and Tony Holland, who intended the drama to be grittier than the BBC's previous forays into soap

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

Compulsive viewing

The programme they created had all the classic soap-opera elements familiar to viewers of *Coronation Street*: strong female characters, a pub at the centre of the community, and in Albert Square a working-class neighbourhood that, whatever the personal fallings out behind closed doors, remained closely-knit at heart. Yet *EastEnders* added to this familiar mix a touch of the "Blitz spirit" and storylines that self-consciously tackled pressing social issues such as unemployment, imprisonment, rape, drugs, racism, homophobia, and suicide. For now, the BBC's new serial also went considerably further than *Coronation Street* in capturing the increasingly multicultural character of late 20th-century Britain.

What perhaps distinguished *EastEnders* most of all from its BBC predecessors was the hard-headed publicity machine that helped to ensure that half the British adult population

would soon be watching regularly. A stream of gossipy titbits about cast members or upcoming plot twists was fed to the tabloid newspapers so that it became "the soap opera they cannot stop writing about". "[Coronation] Street is old-fashioned and corny," the editor of the *News of the World* said. "*EastEnders* with its violence, sex and crime is much more like the real world."

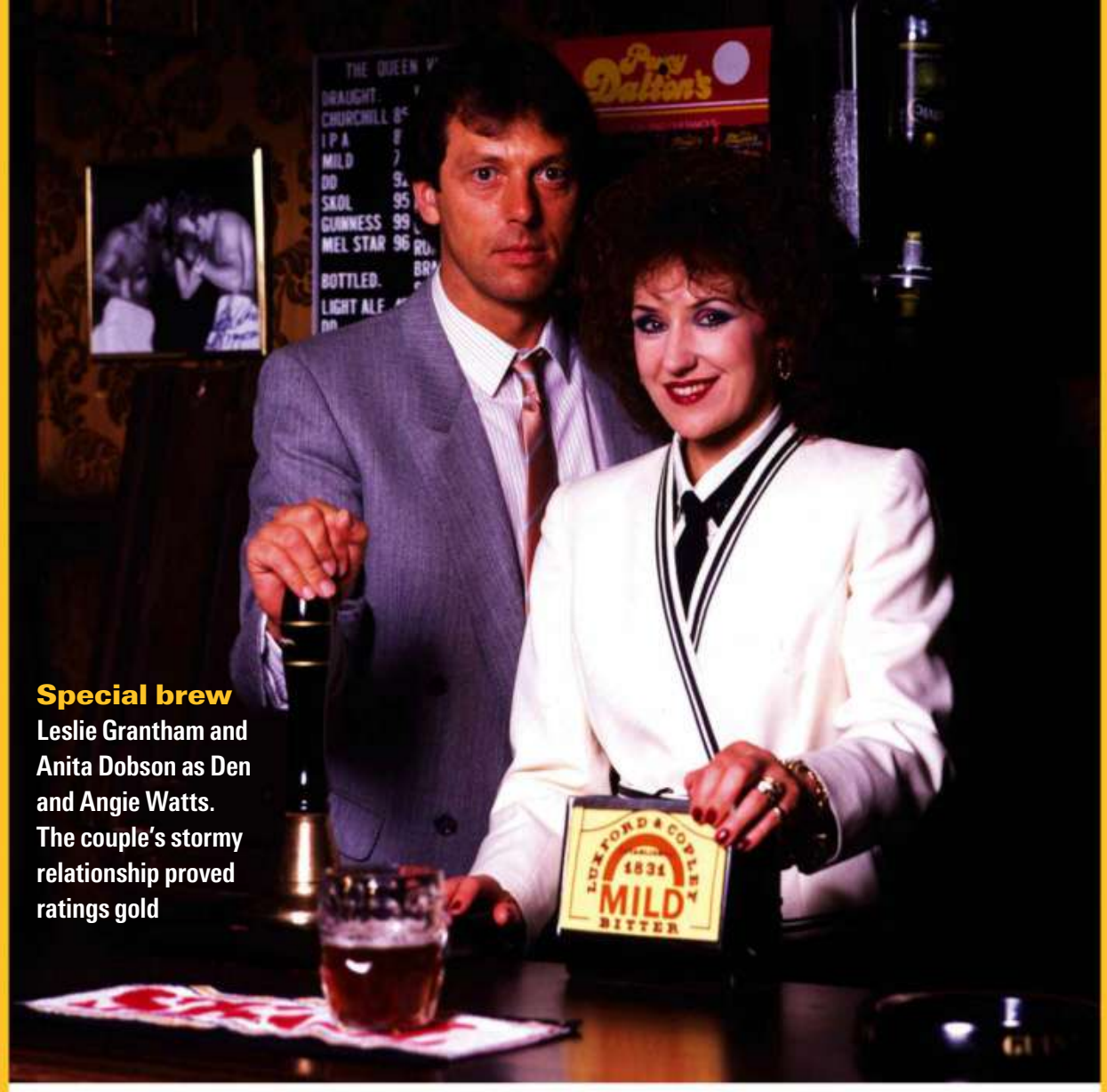
The result of saturation coverage was that the so-called "Dallas effect" kicked in: the serial became so talked about that viewers felt they were missing out if they failed to watch. In less than 12 months, the journalist Andy Medhurst wrote in the *Observer*: "'Who was the father of Michelle's baby?' had replaced 'Who shot JR?' as the country's favourite soap question."

It was Medhurst, too, who later put his finger on what all this meant for a BBC under constant attack from Margaret Thatcher's government during the 1980s. Popularity was the shield which allowed the corporation to also pursue quality. It would, he wrote, "only be a slight exaggeration to say that it was *EastEnders* which kept the BBC safe from privatisation: every time you're grateful that a film, football match or opera isn't scarred by the intrusion of ads, it's the inhabitants of Albert Square you ought to thank." H

David Hendy is emeritus professor (media and film) at the University of Sussex. His latest book is *The BBC: A People's History* (Profile, 2022)

VISIT **Explore online exhibitions** that showcase different aspects of the BBC's history at *bbc.co.uk/100*

A 1995 issue of *Radio Times* marking *EastEnders*' first 10 years. The soap has featured a roster of strong female characters since its inception



Special brew Leslie Grantham and Anita Dobson as Den and Angie Watts. The couple's stormy relationship proved ratings gold

BBC ARCHIVE/ RADIO TIMES-IMMEDIATE MEDIA

IN FOCUS

EastEnders' Christmas special attracts the highest ratings of the decade

In 1986, staff from the social research organisation Mass Observation asked thousands of volunteer diary-keepers to record how they spent Christmas Day. The replies proved – if anyone still needed convincing – that, in many homes, Christmas meant Christmas TV. And, this year in particular, it meant *EastEnders*.

Since it was already the most popular programme on British screens, the BBC opted to treat viewers to not one but two instalments, the first just after 6.30pm, the second at 10pm. Programme details in *Radio Times* offered tantalising clues as to what would unfold across the evening by including two short snatches of dialogue. The first was apparently from Angie, whose husband "Dirty Den" was the landlord of the Queen Vic pub: "Nothing can go wrong, Den. I want this to be the best Christmas we've ever had." For the second instalment, the magazine's listings featured an altogether darker line: "They should bring back hanging for people like Den Watts."

What on earth was capable of provoking such a terrifying outburst after that initial display of goodwill? The diaries reveal a nation of viewers on tenterhooks. "Ate Christmas pudding with cream and sauce in lounge in front of TV," wrote one, "Watched *EastEnders* with great glee and everybody determined to watch second half at 10pm." "9.35pm: more conversation then more TV as we were all waiting for the day's second episode of *EastEnders*," another recorded. "We all agreed that the Beeb had been very crafty."

By 10.30pm, all had been revealed. Den had discovered that Angie had lied to him about being terminally ill, and now served her divorce papers in cold-blooded revenge. If that wasn't dramatic enough, Pauline Fowler had also discovered that Den was the father of Michelle's baby – another long-running plotline that had sparked much audience speculation. It was melodrama with the dial turned to maximum. But it proved to be a ratings winner, too. Thirty million of us watched – the biggest television audience of the 1980s.

> "It was melodrama with the dial turned up to 11 – but it proved to be a ratings winner, too"

BOOKS

IRISH

"Sir Henry Wilson was the first sitting MP to be assassinated since 1882"

Charles Townshend reviews a new study of a dramatic 1922 IRA murder › page 82

MIDDLE AGES

"These were buildings designed to offer glimpses of divine glory, to attain a beauty beyond the earthly"

Eleanor Parker enjoys an exploration of the great cathedrals of medieval Europe › page 81

SOCIAL

"Jensen's subjects are unwilling to be defined by the idea that hardship is all life will allow them"

Fern Riddell applauds an alternative view of 19th-century London street life › page 78

20TH CENTURY

"Foot uses anecdotes and episodes, vignettes and thumbnail portraits to tell the story of Fascism"

David Laven considers a new history of Italy's far-right movement › page 80

INTERVIEW

Estelle Paranque on two 16th-century queens' fraught relationship › page 74

GETTY IMAGES/NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY/JAMIE SIMONDS

INTERVIEW / ESTELLE PARANQUE

"Elizabeth I was a free woman in charge of her fate. Perhaps that's why Catherine de Medici despised her"

ESTELLE PARANQUE talks to Rhiannon Davies about her new book exploring the 30-year rivalry of two of 16th-century Europe's most powerful queens

ON THE EI PODCAST

Rhiannon Davies: Your book *Blood, Fire and Gold* follows two powerhouses of early modern Europe, Elizabeth I and Catherine de Medici. Can you briefly introduce us to them?

Estelle Paranque: I'll start with Elizabeth I of England, daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. She was declared a bastard before she was three [following Anne's execution for treason], but by 1543 she was back in the line of succession and, against the odds really, became queen in 1558. Elizabeth was far from perfect. To compete with Spain in the conquest of the New World involved piracy and slavery. But by being such an extraordinary woman – establishing the Church of England, for instance – she serves as an example of feminism. Such a notion did not exist in the 16th century and I'm sure she wouldn't have identified as a feminist, but she did take on the patriarchy.

There's one comment in particular that Elizabeth made in 1566 that really captures her spirit. In a response to a parliamentary delegation, she said that "it is monstrous that the feet should direct the head". She was declaring that parliament – run by men – were the feet, and she – the queen – was the head. This absolutely did not fit 16th-century values, but she said it anyway. I adore that: if you had to summarise Elizabeth's reign, it would be through that quote.

And what can you tell us about Catherine?

She was an orphan from the powerful house of de Medici, who lost everything and almost everyone at a young age. But her uncle and great-uncle were popes, so she became an important pawn. When King Francis I of France wanted to gain more territories and secure an alliance with the pope, he offered his second son, Henry, to be Catherine's husband. The two got married in October 1533 in Marseille, when Catherine was only 14 years old. You have to imagine this young girl, who had lost her parents within weeks of her birth – her mother probably dying of childbirth complications and her father of wounds when defending Urbino – being welcomed into the French royal family. She was thrilled. She was marrying a young boy who she thought was handsome, and she was absolutely in love with him.

But Henry was not in love with her. Their marriage was not successful in terms of producing heirs, at first, and this became a big problem when Henry's older brother died and Henry and Catherine became the heir and heiress of the French throne. The pressure on Catherine to have children increased, but her husband was devoted to his royal favourite Diane de Poitiers, who was viewed as the most beautiful woman in the land. Diane was older than him, and his tutor, so she had complete power in their relationship.

Catherine spent years being humiliated by this beautiful woman, and ended up actually being given advice and details on how to arouse Henry so they could have children. And it worked. This must have been a bit horrific for Catherine, I think, but in the end she had 10 children, with seven surviving into adulthood.

Blood, Fire and Gold: The Story of Elizabeth I and Catherine de Medici
by Estelle Paranque
(Ebury Press, 336 pages, £20)

What were some of the main differences, and similarities, between the two women?

There are striking parallels between Elizabeth and Catherine in this period, with the former having been removed from court while the latter was humiliated at court. But then from 1558 to 1560, everything changed. Death brought glory: Elizabeth lost her sister Mary I, and Catherine lost her husband Henry. For Elizabeth, it was straightforward as she became queen. It was more complicated for Catherine. Her first-born son, Francis, became king in 1559, and married to Mary Stuart (or Mary, Queen of Scots). This was when Catherine became a political advisor and truly showed her intelligence.

But there was obviously a difference in their queenships: Elizabeth was a queen regnant, so ruled in her own right, and Catherine did not. What's interesting with Catherine is that she never became regent officially. Yet she held that role in all but name after Francis II died a year into his reign in 1560, and her 10-year-old son Charles became king. In fact, even when Charles was meant to be ruling on his own, he was still making it clear that his mother was very much in charge. Catherine remained in all privy councils, even in the reign of her third surviving son, Henry III (1574–89), who was in his twenties when he became king.

She took the title "queen-mother", not the traditional "mother of the king" or "queen dowager". The term was extremely powerful and with it Catherine saw herself as a strong and powerful queen: she was a mother of kings.

Did Catherine's role as queen-mother mean that Elizabeth came to see her as an equal?

Elizabeth surely didn't see Catherine as an equal, and Catherine saw herself in many ways as superior to Elizabeth, since she had given birth to children, and more importantly boys. She really saw power and queenship solely through the lens of motherhood. Elizabeth was single

PROFILE

Estelle Paranque is assistant professor in early modern history at New College of the Humanities. Her books include *Elizabeth I of England Through Valois Eyes* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018) and *Remembering Queens and Kings of Early Modern England and France* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019)

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMIE SIMONDS

and didn't want to have children, a decision that Catherine couldn't understand as she thought motherhood would give Elizabeth protection. For more than a decade, she tried to convince Elizabeth to marry one of her sons. Of course, this wasn't a selfless act: she wanted one of her sons to be king of England. Francis, the Duke of Anjou, named after his brother who had become king, was the most willing to pursue Elizabeth at his mother's insistence. They met in 1579, and Elizabeth gave him a ring and a promise of marriage. I don't think this was for love – I think it was because he amused her – but the pair did develop a type of friendship.

Elizabeth wriggled out of the proposal. I think it was actually a game between her and Catherine, and at the end Catherine was annoyed that it hadn't worked. She lost so much time trying to have her son seduce and pursue a woman who could not care less. For Elizabeth, power came from herself, and for Catherine it was through her sons. That's the biggest difference between the two women.

Was this competing view of power the main driver of the two women's disagreements – more so, even, than their religious differences?

Oh, definitely. I think both were actually, for the period, quite tolerant in terms of religion. I'm not saying that they were accepting of atheism, but I do believe that Elizabeth was relatively accepting of different beliefs until 1570, when she was excommunicated. After that point, she did change her policies and persecute Catholics, and when you read her prayers you can see humanist and reformist ideas. But she wasn't a hardcore Protestant like her brother Edward VI. She actually didn't like some of the things the Protestants and Puritans were planning to do: pushing for religious reforms that would undermine her *via media* vision for the church. So she was really in the middle.

Catherine was massively Catholic. I mean, she was the niece of a pope. But she understood power, she understood politics and, contrary to what people believe, she was very much interested in making peace. To achieve peace in France, she wanted to find compromise. Though it is true that one was a Catholic hammer and the other was a Protestant saviour, in a way they were pushed into these roles. I don't think that means that's where they wanted to be.

> **"Catherine's death marked a shift in Elizabeth's reign, a shift in Elizabeth's mentality. She'd won over her rivals, and that was an important moment for her"**

Did Catherine and Elizabeth ever meet, and how did they communicate with each other?

They exchanged letters with one another, but what I found interesting – and it's what we tend to forget – is that these letters would have been sent via their ambassadors. These men were their mouthpieces, and through the ambassadors' letters detailing their meetings with the queens, we can get a glimpse into the conversations that happened.

The two queens never met in person. Catherine wanted to, saying a few times that she would travel to Dover in order to meet Elizabeth. It's important to remember that Catherine did travel – she went to see her daughter, Elizabeth of Valois, at the border between France and Spain for example – but Elizabeth never left England. In that way, she was less a woman of Europe, although she was heavily involved in European politics and supported Protestantism across the continent.

You write in your book that their relationship wasn't always positive. Why was Calais, in particular, such a sticking point for the two women?

Calais had been part of England for a long time, but by 1558 it was becoming clear that Queen Mary was going to lose it. Her husband, Philip II of Spain, was at war with France, and although the French were initially losing territories they ended up recovering Calais. And it was because of Catherine. While Henry was on campaign and she ruled as co-regent, she gave a beautiful speech in which she appealed to the parlement of Paris for help. I was so touched when I found this speech: she managed to convince them to fund her husband's army, which allowed Henry to push back the English and take Calais.

When Elizabeth became queen in 1558, she wanted Calais back. For the first five years of her reign, this was her obsession, but Catherine stood in her way. By this time, she was monarch in all but name (after Francis II had died and his underage brother Charles had come to the throne). Calais was a huge point of contention between them. Something Elizabeth was able to use to her advantage were the tensions in France. In 1562, the first war of religion broke out, and Elizabeth wanted to help European Protestants. She supported the Huguenots, French Protestants, financially and militarily. For several months from 1562 to 1563, English forces (assisted by the Huguenots) occupied Le Havre, which Elizabeth used as a bargaining chip. She essentially said to Catherine: "If you give me back Calais, I'll return Le Havre."

It was at this point that Catherine showed how intelligent she was. She came to the conclusion that if she could appease the Huguenots then they would side with her again and join forces with the French army. That's what she managed to do by signing a peace between Catholics and Protestants (which brought a brief halt to the war) and, together, the French were able to push the English out of Le Havre.

Virgin queen
A c1583 portrait of Elizabeth I with motifs, such as the sieve in her hand (a reference to the Roman Vestal Virgin Tuccia), celebrating her chastity. In contrast, Catherine's power was derived from her children

BRIDGEMAN

France's queen-mother
The marriage of Catherine de Medici to the future Henry II of France, by Italian artist Jacopo da Empoli. Their relationship produced three French kings

BRIDGEMAN

Elizabeth had no leverage for Calais. This was actually how the two women started their relationship.

That relationship got better when Catherine wanted the throne of England for one of her sons, but by the late 1580s things had turned sour again. Elizabeth was growing even more powerful and wasn't afraid of showing it. She made decisions that appalled Catherine – the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots in 1587 being one of them. And then, the following year, she defeated the Spanish Armada, which really cemented her power on the European stage. I think in many ways, Elizabeth was everything that Catherine would have liked to have been. She was a free woman, in charge of her fate and without any men involved. It's remarkable what Elizabeth achieved, and I think that's why Catherine despised her so much at the end.

How did Elizabeth respond to Catherine's death in 1589?
We have one letter that she sent to Henry III, Catherine's third son to be king of France. They had developed a kind of friendship, so she felt like she had to say something. But the most interesting part of that letter is that she struck a line through some words, even paragraphs, and it is still possible to read what she wrote. In those crossed-out sections, she was extremely respectful of Catherine, praising her for her accomplishments: securing her line and giving birth to kings. Obviously, no one knew at the time that Henry III was about to die the same year, so Elizabeth thought the line was protected.

But I was really interested in the fact that she chose to cross out all these nice things about Catherine, which suggests that she pretended that she didn't want Henry to see them, but sent the letter anyway. It means there's this personal, almost intimate part of the letter before she gives the more formal response to Catherine's death.

I think that Elizabeth realised that once this had happened, she was the only queen left. Now all her counterparts in Europe were male. By 1587, Mary, Queen of Scots was gone; and by 1589, Catherine de Medici was gone. While Philip II's daughters were growing in power, they were nowhere near Elizabeth's level. I think Catherine's death was like the loss of, not perhaps an old friend, but at least someone she'd had an important relationship with for nearly 30 years. It marked a shift in Elizabeth's reign, a shift in Elizabeth's mentality. She'd won over her rivals, and that was an important moment for her.

Why do you think that Elizabeth is the better remembered of the two women?
Catherine has a black legend around her name. She's been absolutely vilified, and blamed for everything that happened in France in the 16th century. All of the religious wars were seen to be because of her. This wasn't true, by the way: Catherine was diplomatic and politically astute, and wars within her realm were a major inconvenience that went against all her plans of establishing a stable and durable dynasty. There was also lots of xenophobia: she was half-French and half-Italian, but only remembered as an Italian woman. Her son Henry III – whose death in 1589 ended the Valois line – has similarly been remembered as a tyrant.

The Guises, a hugely powerful French Catholic family, were largely responsible for this vilification. I don't want to say they were the villains of the 16th century, but they certainly were thorns in the sides of many rulers, including Elizabeth, Henry, Catherine, and even Philip II. They were the family of Mary, Queen of Scots, and wanted to control Europe with Mary ruling England and Scotland, and the Guises in power in France.

Catherine was portrayed in a really negative light. In France and Italy, I think she's quite well-remembered, but for the wrong reasons. Other authors and historians have worked on rehabilitating her image, and I'm building on that work. I hope that, by comparing her to someone as well-known, powerful and respected as Elizabeth I, it sheds light on Catherine's successes and accomplishments. She deserves her life to be recognised, and her story to be told. H

MORE FROM US

Listen to an extended version of this interview with Estelle Paranque on our **podcast** at *historyextra.com/podcast*

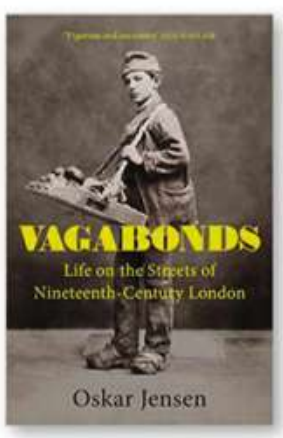
Hat trick
Street sweeper "Tim Besom" invites a pair of ladies to give a gratuity – likely to be spent on rum – in this 1827 engraving. Such characters, treated as objects of pity by the likes of Charles Dickens, are given agency in Oskar Jensen's new book

BRIDGEMAN

SOCIAL

Down but not out

FERN RIDDELL applauds an honest portrait of 19th-century street life in Britain's capital, highlighting the hopes, fears and toils of real people who strove for more than just survival



Vagabonds: Life on the Streets of Nineteenth-Century London
by Oskar Jensen
Duckworth,
368 pages, £20

It's not often a book comes across my desk that deserves high praise, but Oskar Jensen's *Vagabonds* is worthy of just that. Compellingly written, this account of the loves, lives and losses of the people who navigated the warrens and thoroughfares of Regency and Victorian London is utterly captivating. It's part of an important body of works that focus on "history from below" – the lives of ordinary folk rather than the deeds of great men.

Jensen's book is stuffed to bursting with original voices and sources alongside his well-crafted expert analysis. In it we meet renegades and professional criminals as well as embattled elders, all of whom lived, worked and loved on London's streets.

As Jensen investigates and dissects the characters we might come across while wandering this great city, we first meet the abandoned babies and lost infants Charles Dickens was so fond of depicting. But, as Jensen makes clear, what he really wants his readers to do is to turn their "backs on Dickens and the rest" – ignore what they think they know about the lives he has found, and instead prepare to be surprised. This is not a new idea: academic historians have been pushing back against our cultural reliance on Dickens for some time. His fictional version of the past often ignored the realities and agency – especially of women – that can be found during this exciting and explosive era of our history.

Indeed, this is not a book written in praise of those hand-wringing social reformers to whom we are so used to listening as Victorian voices of authority. Nor does it laud those who wanted to moralise about the actions of the

people who lived and worked on the streets of the metropolis. Instead, this is an exploration of real life. Jensen's subjects are not there for us to gawp at, but set out so that we see the world through their eyes, as if we walked along those cobbles and pavements alongside them.

In these pages I learned of the teenage girls who worked as road sweepers and newspaper sellers. I followed the wild, tearaway life of young Edmund Kean, so determined to live on the streets of the city that his guardian padlocked around his neck a brass collar engraved with the words: "This boy belongs to 9, Lisle-Street, Leicester-Square, please bring him home." Drawing on the first-hand accounts and words of street sellers, hawkers, musicians, sex workers and missionaries, every page of *Vagabonds* rings with the thrum and hum of a city that saw itself as the centre of the world.

Jensen also showcases the determined trend in academic history writing to reflect accurately the wildly diverse and curious society in Britain at this time. In the chapter depicting the life of teenage girls we meet Rose and Minnie, mixed-race British teenagers who managed to convince a sympathetic populace that they were runaway American slaves. Capitalising on the 1850s British obsession with the abolitionist novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the two sisters were unmasked only after a determined pursuit by the Mendacity Society.

This reinforces one of the most important points made in *Vagabonds*: we are long overdue a public reassessment of the damage caused by many of the Victorian charities and organisations that were set up supposedly to save those they deemed "dangerous and abandoned". Popular history books often repeat the Victorian propaganda of this era, depicting many of the social reform organisations as benevolent and without sin. However,

"Drawing on first-hand accounts, every page of *Vagabonds* rings with the thrum and hum of a city that saw itself as the centre of the world"

as Jensen's book makes clear, many of the people they targeted did not wish to be "saved", and found their would-be saviours' actions deeply undesirable.

One of the best examples of this is Sarah Tanner, who "of her own accord and without being seduced" became a sex worker in the 1850s. Her story was recorded by the diarist Arthur Munby, who in vain struggled to reconcile her success with his own moral judgment. He befriended Tanner on the streets, watching her earn and save enough from sex work to finally open a respectable coffee house, The Hampshire, on Waterloo Bridge.

Tanner is just one of Jensen's subjects unwilling to be defined by the idea that poverty or hardship is all life will allow them. Theirs are lives we might recognise today, played out on the streets of London just the same. It is a joy to see them depicted in such detail and with such agency in Jensen's work. *Vagabonds* is, just as the author hopes, a book that will be immensely "intimate, affecting [and] raw" for all who read it. H

Fern Riddell is a cultural historian and author specialising in sex, suffrage and entertainment in the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Her latest book is *Sex: Lessons from History* (Hodder, 2021)

BRIDGEMAN/TOPFOTO

Moral conviction A convicts' home in Drury Lane, pictured in 1877. This establishment provided food to convicts on parole – though some may not have welcomed the advice that was also on offer

Red for danger

Patrick Worrall discusses the history behind his new Cold War spy thriller

How did you research the era?

I wanted *The Partisan* to have a sweep that could take in both policy discussions in the corridors of the Kremlin and the everyday life of a "Forest Brother" fighting Stalin's forces. That meant working through a pile of books including Juozas Lukša's account of life as a Lithuanian guerrilla leader, and *The World I Left Behind*, the memoir by Luba Brezhneva [niece of Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev]. I reacquainted myself with Solzhenitsyn and biographies of Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev and Sergei Korolev, mastermind of Russia's space programme. *Life* magazine's online archive was an invaluable visual reference.

A chess tournament is one plot point. Was it inspired by Cold War contests?

Everyone remembers Bobby Fischer's victory over Boris Spassky in 1972, but I wanted to capture the atmosphere of an earlier time, when the Soviets were the chess masters. A Red team crushed the US in the final days of the Second World War, and the symbolism was not lost on Stalin. Eastern bloc chess champions were given extraordinary travel privileges, and western players who wanted to compete had to learn Russian so they could read the latest texts on strategy. These things feature in *The Partisan*.

Are your characters based on real people from the time?

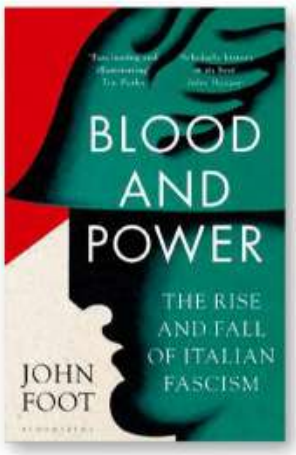
Readers will spot fragments of Khrushchev, Korolev and Yekaterina Furtseva, the most powerful woman in the Soviet Union in the 1950s. My character Maxim Karpov is a version of Stalin's repellent henchman Lavrentiy Beria (pictured above) – a prolific rapist and murderer too awful for fiction. The assassin Greta is a composite of tales of bravery and strength that I read and heard from people who lived through events in the book.

The Partisan by Patrick Worrall
Bantam, 384 pages, £16.99

20TH CENTURY

Far right turn

DAVID LAVEN has mixed feelings about an engaging but uneven new examination of the causes, methods and impacts of Mussolini's Fascist regime



Blood and Power: The Rise and Fall of Italian Fascism
by John Foot
Bloomsbury,
432 pages, £25

GETTY IMAGES

Rome in a day Fascist leader Benito Mussolini (centre) during the March on Rome in late October 1922. The day after Mussolini's blackshirts amassed at the capital, King Victor Emmanuel III named him prime minister

In this lively, readable, and provocative work, John Foot uses anecdotes and episodes, vignettes and thumbnail portraits to tell the story of Fascism.

Unusually, he begins his narrative in June 1914, when popular insurrection broke out in central Italy, only to be met with the full repressive power of the Liberal state. But he really hits his stride when recounting the systematic violence used by the nascent Fascist movement after 1919. I'd thought I was fully aware of Fascist thuggery: the savage beatings and forced castor oil administrations, the kidnap and torture of opponents, the arson and vandalism, the connivance of the police and armed forces. But I had never appreciated its sheer scale or nastiness until I read this book.

Foot's plausible thesis is that it was violence that brought Fascism to power and underpinned the regime. What he does not do is explain why so many Italians embraced *squadrismo* (the semi-organised violence of black-shirted Fascist paramilitaries), nor why so many more enthusiastically rallied to Mussolini after his March on Rome in 1922.

This book includes lots of detail on the victims of Fascism, including brilliantly crafted and tragic accounts of individuals who suffered intimidation, exile and even death for opposing the regime. Foot also vividly depicts the individuals who tried to kill Il Duce in the 1920s. But he never tells us why Italians wanted to lynch attempted assassins, nor why women wept with joy when they learned that Mussolini had survived. The extensive historiographical debate about whether Mussolini was able to build consensus in the 1930s is largely absent here, too, and Foot scarcely discusses the key role of Catholicism.

Given his brilliant books on Italian football and cycling, it is not surprising that sport features centrally in Foot's otherwise slightly rushed account, but it is a shame he does not draw more on the vast literature on Italian culture and society in this period.

Some key areas are neglected almost entirely. For example, the so-called "Battle for Highbury" between Italy's hitherto all-conquering football team and England – probably the least friendly "friendly" ever played – gets more space than Italy's economy or Italian relations with Germany in the 1930s. Yet it was Mussolini's alliance with Hitler that brought Italy into the Second World War, providing the context for much of the worst Fascist violence and for the fall of Fascism. Foot flits over Italy's disastrous campaigns in Greece, Yugoslavia and the USSR – but he mentions the magnificent beard of the leftwing Jewish lawyer Emanuele Modigliani on half a dozen occasions.

> **"Foot's plausible thesis is that it was violence that brought Fascism to power and which underpinned the regime"**

At the end of this engaging work, Foot refers to his great-grandmother's view of "the era of Fascism in Italy as a 'wonderful' time", and speculates that many Italians probably shared her opinion. So it's a shame that the voices of the vast numbers of Italians who actively supported the regime – or at least found ways to accommodate themselves to it – are not heard.

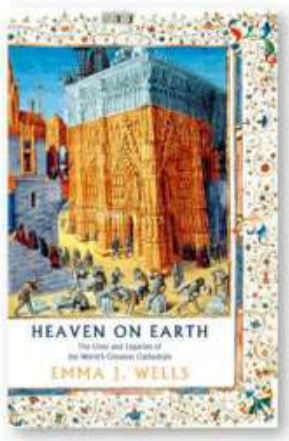
Overall, Foot's quirky book is a joy, but someone who does not know much about the period will end up with an odd view of Fascist Italy if this is all they read. H

David Laven is associate professor in history at the University of Nottingham, specialising in Italy

MIDDLE AGES

Tower and glory

ELEANOR PARKER is largely impressed by a novel biography of Europe's medieval Christian masterpieces



Heaven on Earth: The Lives and Legacies of the World's Greatest Cathedrals
by Emma J Wells
Apollo, 512 pages, £40
(Publishes on 1 September but available to preorder now)

Among the many legacies the Middle Ages left to the modern world, the medieval cathedral must rank as one of the most precious. The cumulative work of generations, products of centuries of ingenuity and imagination, cathedrals carry in their stones the stories of the people and communities who constructed them, as well as the histories of the cities over which they tower. These were buildings designed to offer glimpses of divine glory, to attain a beauty beyond the earthly. As Emma J Wells observes in *Heaven on Earth*, the medieval cathedral "was intended to be the metaphorical and physical exemplar of the Celestial City, the Heavenly Jerusalem… No wonder Gothic cathedrals exploded with light and the gleam of gold and jewel-encrusted walls, coloured glass and luminous pearls."

This book tells the stories of 16 medieval cathedrals, recounting their architectural history over the course of the Middle Ages, and exploring the lives of the builders and patrons who contributed to them. There is a geographical sweep – with monuments ranging from Istanbul's Hagia Sophia to York Minster, in cities from Prague to Santiago de Compostela – but a special focus on France and England, which between them account for 11 of the case studies. With a particular, though not exclusive, interest in the Gothic, the book functions partly as a history of this style as it spread from France across Europe from the 12th century onwards.

Themes recur across the different stories: the constant danger from fire and other disasters (earthquake, plague or short-sighted building practices), but also the opportunity such calamities provided for rebuilding and creative responses to engineering challenges. Cathedrals may have been intended to represent heaven, but their foundations and materials were very much of the earth. Their spires soared towards the skies, but were always being pulled earthwards – literally or figuratively – by mundane forces. Wells neatly describes the inventive ways in which medieval builders tried to work within their political, financial or physical constraints.

With imaginative descriptions of colour and light effects, Wells evokes how these buildings might have looked to the eyes of their first builders and worshippers. Such a book needs good pictures, and *Heaven on Earth* is attractively illustrated with full-colour images.

Unfortunately, there are also inaccuracies. The religious festivals and liturgical rituals for which these cathedrals were built – inseparable from a full understanding of each monument's meaning – are not always accurately described. There are instances of exaggeration and imprecision, such as in the confused account of William the Conqueror's coronation that opens the chapter on Winchester Cathedral, and in the accompanying description of Winchester's Anglo-Saxon history.

Also, contrary to Wells' account, *The Canterbury Interlude and the Merchant's Tale of Beryn* (an anonymous later addition to *The Canterbury Tales*) was not written by Chaucer. In fact, Chaucer's own pilgrims never made it to Canterbury. When their author left them they were still on the road, listening to a sermon about how to reach "Jerusalem celestial" – the heavenly city of which the cathedral, their ultimate but unattained destination, was intended to give them a glimpse. H

Eleanor Parker is lecturer in medieval English literature at the University of Oxford

Past perfect The magnificent cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris before it was ravaged by fire in 2019

GETTY IMAGES

AUTHORS ON THE PODCAST

Paul Fischer on the mysterious disappearance of a 19th-century French inventor

"In September 1890, Louis Le Prince visited his brother in Dijon, eastern France. As he set out on his return journey north, en route to premiere an invention in America, his family saw him onto the train – but when it pulled into Paris, he was no longer there. There was no evidence of what happened to him, and it took weeks for anyone to realise he had disappeared – never to be seen again."

Emma Smith on the enduring magic of books

"Books have been powerful for over two millennia, but what strikes me is how little they have changed in that time. In some ways, an ancient Roman would recognise today's best-sellers. Books were first produced to provide valuable scriptural advice and, though most of today's texts are not religious, some of that sacred quality continues to attach itself to the book – there's still a caution about writing on pages, and a frustration when someone else does."

Catherine Hanley on how medieval monarchs were affected by the unexpected

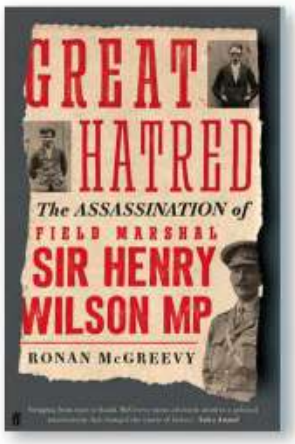
"We often forget that people in the past lived through very uncertain times. The best-laid plans could be thrown by accidents, infertility or mortality. Many people know that the White Ship disaster caused a succession crisis, but I could also make a pretty good case that Eleanor of Aquitaine became queen of England only because a teenager in Paris was killed by a pig."

ON THE HI PODCAST

IRISH HISTORY

A political soldier

CHARLES TOWNSHEND is intrigued by a new analysis of the assassination of loyalist Irish politician Sir Henry Wilson, a contentious figure whose death may have helped spark civil war



Great Hatred: The Assassination of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson MP
by Ronan McGreevy
Faber, 464 pages, £20

Anyone who confronts the vivid portrait of Sir Henry Wilson (pictured below right) in London's National Portrait Gallery will probably wonder what he was really like. He himself had reservations about the image, saying it made him look like "an awful blackguard". And that, of course, is exactly what his enemies – and he made many, some of them deadly, as it turned out – thought he was.

Wilson was a political soldier in both the good and the bad senses. He was one of the earliest generals to perfect a way of engaging with politicians ("frocks", as he dismissively called them), and his liaison skills helped win the First World War by keeping the British and French talking to each other. But he was also a passionately committed partisan in the biggest political issue of his day, Irish home rule. He became deeply embroiled in the attempt to prevent the army being used to impose home rule at the height of the Ulster crisis in 1914, which effectively paralysed Britain's Liberal government.

When he retired as chief of the Imperial General Staff in 1922, Wilson entered parliament for an Ulster Unionist seat, and became security adviser to the new Northern Ireland government. Irish nationalists saw him as the animating spirit behind the sectarian violence in Belfast, which they called "the Pogrom". In reality, he tried to reduce the sectarian dimension of the Northern security forces, but nationalists naturally judged him by his belligerent public utterances. On 22 June 1922, he was shot dead by two gunmen outside his London house – the first sitting MP to be assassinated since 1882.

His death caused public outrage in Britain. The government believed that the killers had acted on the orders of Rory O'Connor, the anti-treaty IRA leader commanding the force that had occupied several buildings in the centre of Dublin in defiance of the provisional government set up under the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty. (Many Republicans rejected that treaty because it kept the new Irish Free State within the British empire.) O'Connor had planned several assassination attempts during the Anglo-Irish War, targeting prime minister David Lloyd George and other ministers, as well as Wilson himself. But none were carried through, partly because they were disliked by Michael Collins. And O'Connor had nothing to do with this operation.

> **"Irish nationalists saw Wilson as the animating spirit behind the sectarian violence in Belfast, which they called 'the Pogrom'"**

Ronan McGreevy's new study, telling the story with journalistic brio, suggests that Collins (head of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, to which the killers belonged) was involved, though there is no direct evidence for this. Collins certainly held Wilson responsible for the anti-Catholic violence in Ulster but for him, as leader of the provisional government, the killing was ill timed. Lloyd George's furious demand that Collins take direct action against O'Connor was shortly followed by the first assault in what became the Irish Civil War.

Whether this makes Wilson's assassination "Ireland's Sarajevo", as McGreevy calls it, is perhaps doubtful: the civil war was already effectively in progress. The author also gives unmerited prominence to the contention that Wilson, had he lived, might have led the diehard Tories to establish a dictatorship in Britain – an argument brusquely dismissed as "absurd" by Keith Jeffery, the best modern writer on Wilson. But McGreevy's carefully drawn picture of the two London-born assassins does much to illuminate the IRA's largely neglected mainland campaign, fought by "uniquely British guerrillas". H

Charles Townshend is professor emeritus of international history at Keele University. His books include *The Republic* (Penguin, 2013)

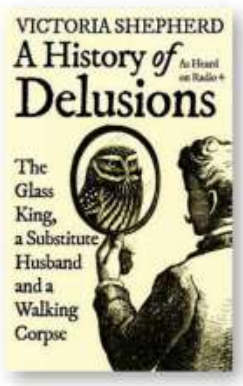
NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

Sitting MP
Sir William Orpen's 1919 portrait of Henry Wilson, who thought it made him look "an awful blackguard"

Royal delusion
The future King George V in 1893. A Parisian woman believed that the British monarch was courting her

HEALTH

Troubled minds



A History of Delusions: The Glass King, a Substitute Husband and a Walking Corpse
by Victoria Shepherd
Oneworld, 352 pages, £16.99

Have you ever wondered whether your family had been replaced by doubles? Or if a European monarch was secretly in love with you? Victoria Shepherd's book explores the stories of people who would have answered with a confident "Yes".

In her new book we meet "Madame M", a flamboyantly dressed couturière in early 20th-century Paris, who believed that her husband and child were duplicates and that she herself was an abducted heiress whose grandmother owned Rio de Janeiro. Meanwhile, fellow Parisian "Léa Anna B" became convinced that King George V was courting her through a series of secret emissaries.

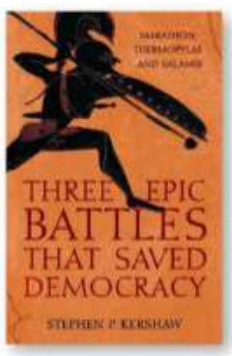
This absorbing study draws on cases from five centuries of European history, spanning various nationalities, age groups, genders and social classes. Though the names for specific disorders – paranoid delusion, for instance, or delusions of grandeur – may be relatively new, their existence is long attested. Consider, for example, the French king Charles VI (reigned 1380–1422), who thought he was made of glass. The influence of new technology on the imagination is a fascinating theme: one patient is obsessed by the Paris metro; another, a century earlier, by the guillotine.

Shepherd goes beyond formal, detached accounts by physicians, trying instead to get a glimpse of whole human beings whose lives unravelled through trauma into delusional thinking and, often, the asylum. She gathers fragments of their lives from parish and census records, eavesdrops on their conversations, and draws her readers into the "dimly lit rooms" of delusions as people experienced them. Occasionally, novelistic touches distract from, rather than enhance, these remarkable tales; switches between past and present tenses can be a little muddling. Overall, though, this is a humane, attentive exploration of locked-in worlds inhabited by people whose mental certainties could be both comforting and terrifying. H

Mary Ann Lund, associate professor in Renaissance English literature at the University of Leicester and author of *A User's Guide to Melancholy* (Cambridge University Press, 2021)

ANCIENT GREECE

Clashes of the titans



Three Epic Battles that Saved Democracy
by Stephen P Kershaw
Robinson, 480 pages, £30

The battle of Marathon, claimed 19th-century philosopher John Stuart Mill, was more important to English history than the battle of Hastings. The idea that great events of the ancient world were directly relevant to the modern has long been a mainstay of European culture. And few such events could compare with the epic struggle between the Greek city-states and Persia, the world's first superpower.

This idea underpins Stephen P Kershaw's retelling of the expeditions of the Persian king Darius in 490 BC and his son Xerxes a decade later. He has produced a book that is often elegant in style but remains clear, concise and eminently readable. His knowledge of the sources is generally excellent, and he supplements the narrative with archaeological, artistic and topographical details that add colour and perspective.

His discussions are often very perceptive: passages on the Trojan War, the Scythians and Greek warfare are informative and accessible, while the account of Marathon is a highlight of the book. Elsewhere, though, Kershaw has a tendency to simply repeat the ancient sources, with his usual healthy scepticism relegated to the endnotes. The chapter on Sparta is rather clichéd, while the Persians appear as little more than the hubristic dullards of the later, post-Herodotus Greek imagination. We gain no sense of the why or wherefore of their actions beyond a "gratuitous expansionism".

Rather than focus on the titular "three epic battles" of Marathon, Thermopylae and Salamis, Kershaw actually places five major clashes into the wider context. Likewise, the premise of "saving democracy" appears only in the occasional touch of hyperbole. When the Athenian democracy itself is relevant, Kershaw explains the significance but does not allow it to dominate the narrative. This is wise, because the premise of the title is tendentious at best. In this sense, Kershaw's telling of the tale is better than the name of his book would imply. H

Ian Macgregor Morris, senior lecturer at the University of Salzburg, and editor of *Cyrus the Great* (Flame Tree, 2022)

GETTY IMAGES

HISTORY EXTRA MASTERCLASS

Femina: Women of the Middle Ages
with Janina Ramirez

Janina Ramirez is an Oxford lecturer, BBC broadcaster, author and researcher. She has presented and written more than 30 hours of BBC history documentaries on TV and radio, and her latest book is *Femina: A New History of the Middle Ages, Through the Women Written Out of it* (WH Allen, 2022).

8, 15 and 22 July 2022

This curated three-part virtual lecture series from historian and broadcaster Janina Ramirez will offer a fresh look at the medieval world through the women usually written out of it. From political power-players to the overlooked figures who deserve to be better known, this masterclass promises to restore women to their rightful place in a fascinating era.

LYNN HATZIUS

Each session combines an introductory lecture, extensive Q&A, and discussion of a primary source chosen by Janina Ramirez.

You can book individual modules or block-book the whole masterclass.

Tickets: £15 per module or £39 for all three modules

Book now at historyextra.com/masterclass

ELF

WORDS BY **MATT ELTON**

ALSO ON THE BOOKSHELF

FICTION

Dark Earth
by Rebecca Stott
(Fourth Estate, 352 pages, £14.99)

Drowned world

On an island in the middle of the Thames, sisters Isla and Blue watch for boats heading in from the sea. It's AD 500 and here, in the shadow of a half-ruined, abandoned Londinium, an untimely death forces them to navigate the currents of submerged secrets and forbidden knowledge. This lyrical, evocative novel follows that journey, as the turmoil leads them to a hidden community of rebel women.

SOCIAL

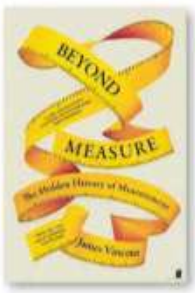
Shifting Currents: A World History of Swimming
by Karen Eva Carr
(Reaktion Books, 456 pages, £25)

Different strokes

Readers coming to this social history of swimming expecting light-weight beach fare might be surprised by both its scope and the depth of its analysis. Drawing on archaeological, documentary and visual sources from ancient cultures to the 20th century, it sketches the ways in which the ability to swim – or, conversely, a suspicious inability to do so – became markers of class, status and moral virtue.

SOCIAL

Beyond Measure: The Hidden History of Measurement
by James Vincent
(Faber & Faber, 432 pages, £18.99)

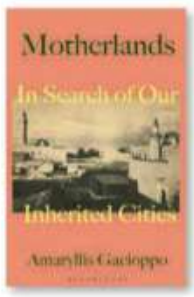


Great lengths

A history of measurement might sound abstract or academic, but this lively book vividly illustrates the ways in which defining the extent of things has, in turn, come to define human development. Spanning millennia from ancient Egypt through to the 21st century's precision engineering, the narrative also highlights how measurement has tipped over into control: of land, of people, and of ideas.

CULTURAL

Motherlands: In Search of Our Inherited Cities
by Amaryllis Gacioppo
(Bloomsbury, 336 pages, £20)

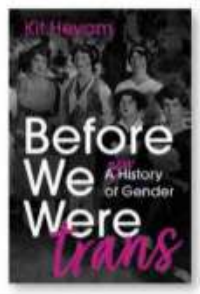


Longing and belonging

The idea of home – whether real or imagined – animates this blend of memoir and history, which explores how our desire to identify our origins can be complicated by wider social and political shifts and schisms. Amaryllis Gacioppo traces the ways in which her ancestors' lives were bound up with notions such as citizenship and the nation state, and the result is unusual, intimate, and often moving.

SEXUALITY

Before We Were Trans: A New History of Gender
by Kit Heyam
(Basic Books, 352 pages, £20)



Being and time

This book, from Queen Mary University of London lecturer and queer history activist Kit Heyam, charts the experiences of people who existed outside gender binaries across a diverse sweep of times and places, from ancient cultures to the present day. It tackles some of the issues with viewing historical identities through a modern lens, but never loses sight of the human stories at their heart.

SCIENCE

Elusive: How Peter Higgs Solved the Mystery of Mass
by Frank Close
(Allen Lane, 304 pages, £25)

Particular brilliance

In 1964 a young scientist wrote a pair of academic papers making the case for a previously unknown, and incredibly tiny, particle. The search for what became known as the Higgs boson went on to become one of the great goals of physics over the next five decades until, remarkably, its existence was finally established in 2012. This accessible account tells the story of that quest, and of the man who made it possible.

LITERATURE

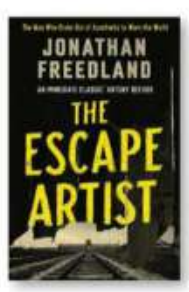
Orwell and Empire
by Douglas Kerr
(Oxford University Press, 224 pages, £25)

Empire state of mind

The ways in which George Orwell's novels reflect the political concerns of his era have been much explored – but, this book argues, comparatively little attention has been paid to the influence of colonialism. Focusing particularly on the author's Anglo-Indian upbringing and ideas from the east, it also assesses how these twin threads informed his wider views on subjects including justice, class and political terror.

WW2

The Escape Artist
by Jonathan Freedland
(John Murray, 400 pages, £20)



Against all odds

In April 1944, Rudolf Vrba broke out of Auschwitz. As this biography makes clear, it was a gruelling feat of endurance and bravery – but also just one remarkable episode in a life packed with incident. Drawing on his experiences at the camp, Vrba compiled a report that laid bare the horrors of the Nazi regime and that, eventually, went on to save lives. It's an extraordinary story, compellingly told in this gritty account. H

ENCOUNTERS

DIARY: VISIT / WATCH / LISTEN / TASTE
By **Jonathan Wright, Samantha Nott** and **Jonny Wilkes**
92 EXPLORE... Heligan, Cornwall
94 TRAVEL... Amman, Jordan

Railway romp
Three Salford evacuees join original "railway child" Bobbie (Jenny Agutter, right), her daughter Annie (Sheridan Smith, third left), grandson Thomas (Austin Haynes, centre) and US soldier Abe (KJ Aikens, second right) in a sequel to the timeless family favourite

STUDIOCANAL

WATCH

Brood on the tracks

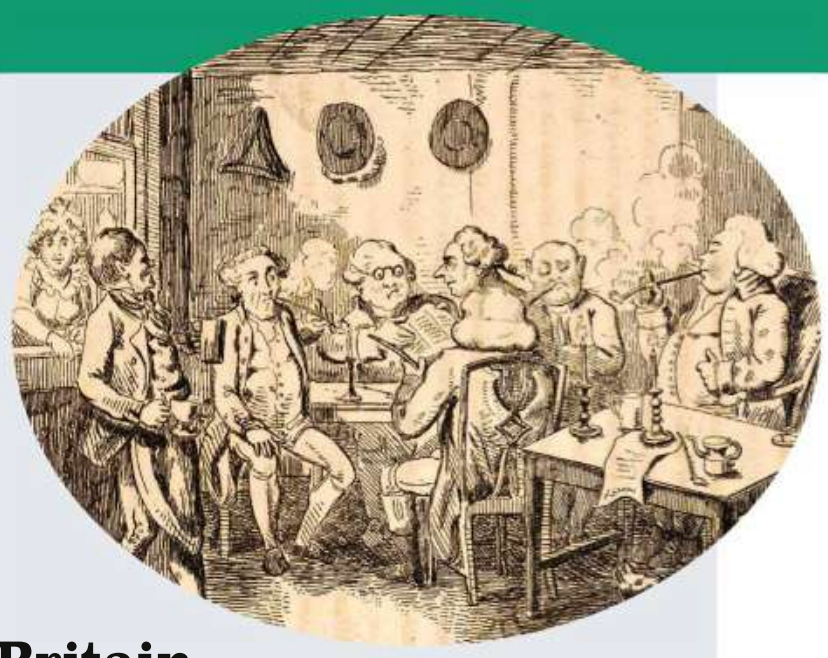
The Railway Children (1970), based on E Nesbit's 1905 novel for young people, has endured to become one of the most beloved British family films ever made. Perhaps this in part explains why it has taken more than 50 years for a sequel to arrive – *The Railway Children Return*, directed by Morgan Matthews and scripted by Danny Brocklehurst.

Jenny Agutter provides the essential link between the two films, reprising her childhood role as Roberta "Bobbie" Waterbury. By 1944, now grown up and mother to Annie (Sheridan Smith) and grandmother to Thomas (Austin Haynes), she's made her home in the Yorkshire village of Oakworth. Here, during the Second World War, she takes in three evacuee children from Salford: Lily (Beau Gadsdon), Pattie (Eden Hamilton) and Ted (Zac Cudby) Watts.

Adventures soon ensue, especially after the children discover injured American soldier Abe (KJ Aikens) hiding out in a rail yard. Can the youngsters help their new friend?

Expect glorious countryside, steam engines and, as with the original, enough grit to prevent proceedings from getting too sentimental. The adult cast is rounded out by Tom Courtenay and John Bradley (*Game of Thrones*).

The Railway Children Return
In cinemas from Friday 15 July



An 1817 engraving depicting drinkers in Nottingham. The history of alcohol consumption and sobriety in the east Midlands is the focus of a new exhibition

VISIT

Bibulous Britain

It's long been said that British people love a drink. Pubs have always been plentiful, light-hearted tales of drunkenness ubiquitous, and the brewing of beer a source of local pride.

This culture of consumption is explored in an exhibition at Lakeside Arts, the University of Nottingham's arts centre, through local stories of the 18th and 19th centuries. But that's only half the picture. The displays also highlight the nation's changing relationship with alcohol in an era when, with the emergence of temperance movements, reformers aimed to call time on drinking for good.

Last Orders: Stories of Alcohol and Abstinence in the East Midlands
Lakeside Arts, Nottingham / Until 9 October / Free entry / *lakesidearts.org.uk*

VISIT

Air time

As part of Broadcast 100, a year-long series of events marking the centenary of the BBC and 40th anniversary of Channel 4, a new exhibition at Bradford's National Science and Media Museum charts how the world of broadcasting has evolved, from the BBC's first radio programmes of 1922 to the streaming services of today. The technological innovations and pioneering personalities of the industry have changed the way we connect with each other, and that impact is explored through interactive displays. Visitors will also have the chance to imagine how broadcasting will develop over the next 100 years.

A BBC camera captures matches at Wimbledon in glorious technicolour for the first time, in 1967

Switched on
National Science and Media Museum, Bradford / 23 July – Jan 2023 / Free entry / *scienceandmediamuseum.org.uk*

The actor Hugo Bolton (pictured) lip-syncs to a 1980s interview with an HIV-positive gay man in *Aids: The Unheard Tapes*. The series is part of the BBC's output marking the 50th anniversary of Gay Pride

WATCH

Out and proud

It's five decades since the UK's first official Pride event was held in London, on 1 July 1972. Marking the 50th anniversary, the BBC has made a huge amount of LGBTQ+ programming available on its networks and via iPlayer and Sounds.

Highlights available to stream include *Aids: The Unheard Tapes*, a three-part documentary that tells the story of the HIV crisis in the UK, drawing on 1980s audio interviews with HIV-positive gay men and their friends. The series marks the 40th anniversary of the death of Terry Higgins, who died of an Aids-related illness on 4 July 1982.

Aids: The Unheard Tapes
BBC Two and BBC iPlayer / Available to stream now

LAKESIDE ARTS/NATIONAL SCIENCE AND MEDIA MUSEUM/BBC

Klaus Fuchs in 1959. The German scientist worked on the Manhattan Project, but moonlighted as a Soviet spy

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

LISTEN

Tinker, tailor, scientist, spy

By any standards, Klaus Fuchs (1911–88) was a talented scientist – a German theoretical physicist who worked on the Manhattan Project that developed the first atomic bombs. But his true talent arguably lay elsewhere: he was also a brilliant spy who passed nuclear secrets to the Soviets.

Presented by Rosa Ellis – whose great-aunt Ursula Kuczynski, better known as Agent Sonya, was Fuchs' handler – the second season of BBC Radio series and podcast *The Bomb* explores how this betrayal came about and considers its long-term impacts.

The story begins in the 1930s, when Fuchs – the son of pacifist Quakers, and who held leftwing sympathies – left Nazi Germany. Interned and shipped to Canada during the early part of the Second World War, he later returned to the UK and secured a job with Rudolf Peierls, another German émigré physicist and a key figure in Britain's nuclear weapons programme.

Without giving away too much, it's a story replete with fascinating characters including Jim Skardon, the MI5 officer who not only interrogated Fuchs but also worked (largely unsuccessfully, it has to be said) to expose the Cambridge spy ring.

The Bomb
BBC World Service & BBC Sounds / Saturday 9 July

WEEKLY TV & RADIO
Visit **historyextra.com** for weekly updates on upcoming television and radio programmes

HISTORY ON THE AIRWAVES

"There was a feeling after the First World War: how is western civilisation going to recover from *that*?"

PAUL KEERS (left), chair of the TS Eliot Society, discusses *The Waste Land* and his involvement in BBC Radio 3 programming that accompanies the influential poem's centenary

How is BBC Radio 3 marking the centenary of *The Waste Land*?
There's a dramatic performance featuring actors [including Ade Edmondson] playing characters from the poem. Before the performance there will be a *Sunday Feature* in which I speak to five Eliot experts to introduce the poem, and explain to the audience something of the history and nature of *The Waste Land*.

For example, Professor Mark Ford from University College London talks about the role of London in the poem. For a period, Eliot worked in a little basement room at Lloyds Bank, and the city, its churches and its commuters form a really strong presence in the poem.

What is it about the poem that speaks so profoundly to readers, even today?
It touches on a far broader range of emotions, experiences and literature than some of Eliot's other work does, so people find they can connect with it in a variety of different ways. Some of his other poetry is more focused, and it can be more difficult to find a way in.

What was the backdrop to the poem's composition?
There was a particular feeling after the First World War had ended: how is western civilisation going to recover from *that*? By the time Eliot wrote *The Waste Land*, the war had been over for three years, but society still hadn't really got back in shape. Eliot was in a difficult situation personally. He had made quite a rash marriage [to Vivienne Haigh-Wood Eliot in 1915], and both he and his wife were suffering psychiatric problems. A combination of societal and personal issues probably came together to inspire the poem.

It's a key work in modernism, but how important is this poem in terms of wider cultural history?
If you look at that period, you had James Joyce working on the novel, you had the Cubist painters in France, you had Stravinsky's music, and *The Waste Land* sits alongside those developments. It is the poem of its time, in the same way you could argue that *Ulysses* [1922] was the novel of its time.

How successful was the poem when it was first published?
It wasn't a huge financial success. Eliot archivist Nancy Fulford has a letter from Leonard Woolf [the Woolfs' Hogarth Press published *The Waste Land*], written nine months after it came out, which says: "It's been a great success, it's sold 330 copies." Its life-changing aspect was that it gave Eliot a position as a respected avant-garde poet, putting him in a tremendously powerful position in London literary circles. H

Drama on 3: He Do The Waste Land in Different Voices will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on Sunday 10 July

BBC RADIO 3

TS Eliot with fellow writer Virginia Woolf (centre) and his first wife, Vivienne Haigh-Wood Eliot, in 1932

TASTE

Columella's cheese and herb moretum

This Roman "salad" doesn't resemble the leafy dish we know today, instead being stuffed with high-calorie creamy cheese. Popular in the late Republican and early imperial periods, this version of the vegetarian dish comes from a Roman farmer and writer called Columella (AD c4–70).

Difficulty: 2/10
Time: 20 mins

INGREDIENTS

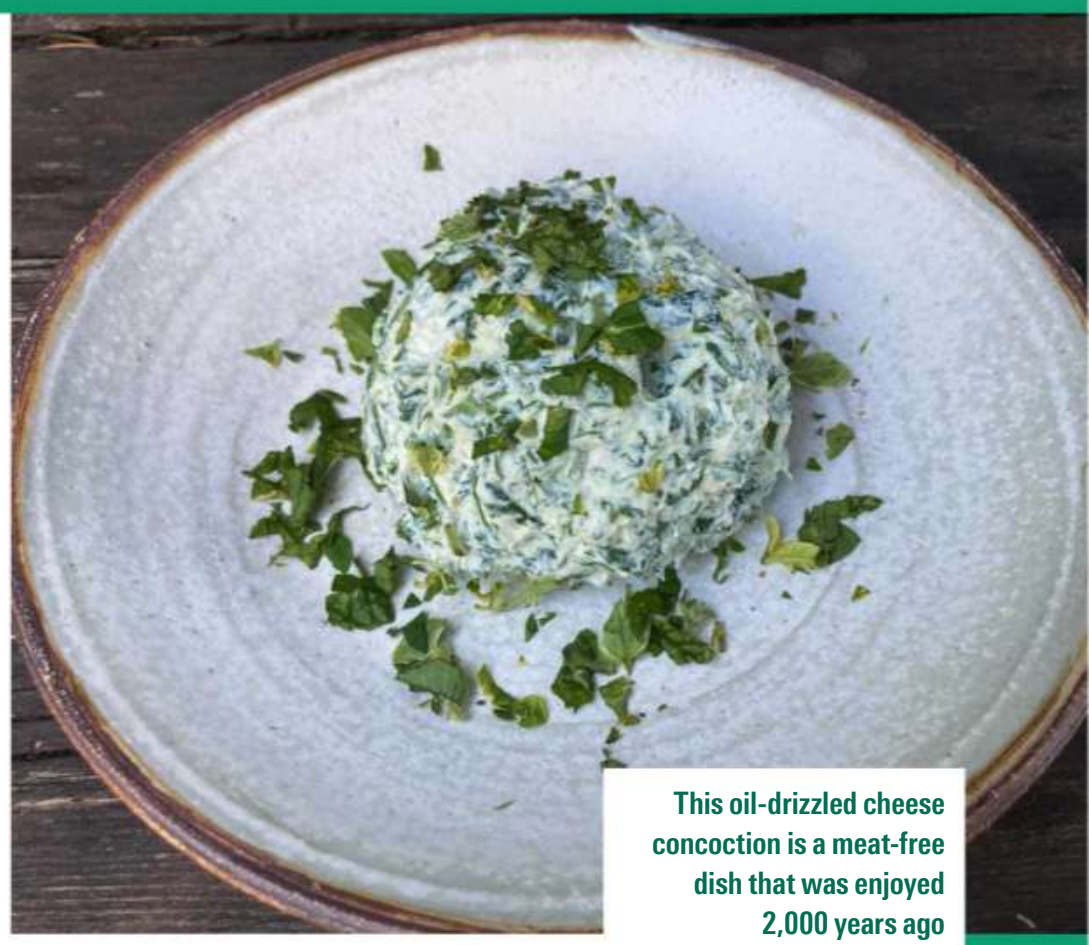
450g fresh ricotta
1/2 tsp dried mint (or 10 fresh leaves)
1/2 tsp dried coriander (or 10 fresh leaves)
1/2 tsp dried savory (or marjoram or sage)
1 tsp dried thyme (or a few fresh sprigs, with the twigs removed)
A few leaves of edible rue (or a handful of cicoria/dandelion greens)
Handful of fresh parsley
2 chives/green onions
Handful of curly endive leaves
Handful of arugula (rocket)
Fresh cracked pepper
Salt to taste
Olive oil

Implements
A mortar and pestle

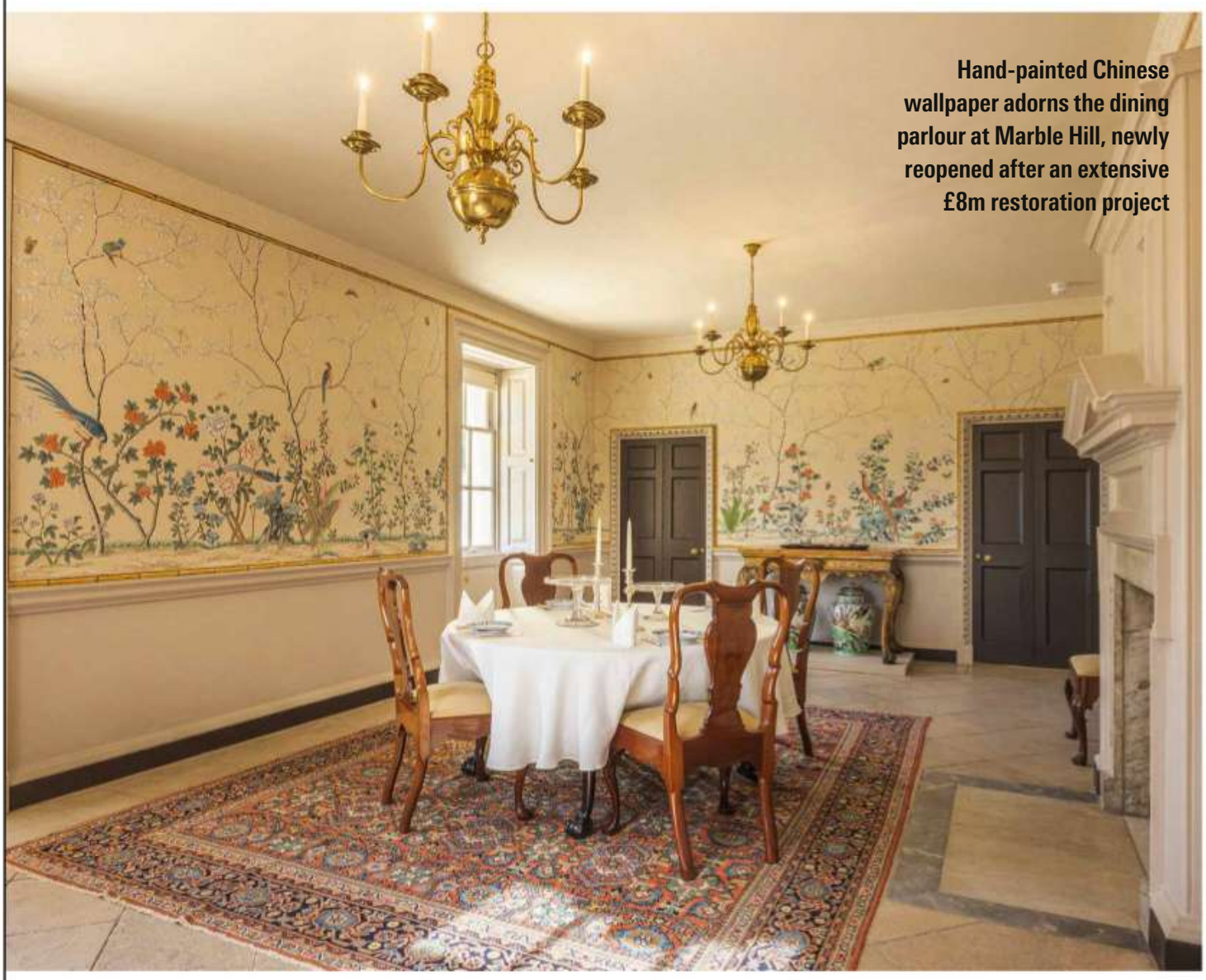
METHOD

1. Trim and wash your fresh herbs and greens.
2. Place the herbs and greens into the mortar until it is full, and then grind it with your pestle, moving it in a circular motion around the inner edge of the mortar. Depending on the size of your mortar, you may need to add the ingredients in batches. Once you've ground each batch, place the mix in a bowl to the side and add your next batch of ingredients to the mortar.
3. Once you've ground all your herbs and greens, transfer the mix to a large bowl and add in the cheese, plus salt and pepper to suit your taste.
4. Once you've achieved your desired texture, transfer the moretum into a serving bowl and drizzle with olive oil.

Recipe: Tavola Mediterranea. tavolamediterranea.com



This oil-drizzled cheese concoction is a meat-free dish that was enjoyed 2,000 years ago



Hand-painted Chinese wallpaper adorns the dining parlour at Marble Hill, newly reopened after an extensive £8m restoration project

VISIT

Step inside a Georgian gem

On the banks of the Thames in south-west London, Marble Hill has recently reopened following an £8m restoration. This grand Palladian villa was constructed in the 1720s for Henrietta Howard, Countess of Suffolk and mistress of the Prince of Wales, the future George II. The survivor of an abusive marriage, she also started losing her hearing at a young age – adversity explored in displays at Marble Hill.

Its 27 hectares of riverside parkland and gardens have been spruced up, too, while the house's interior was refurbished based on an inventory taken days after Howard's death in 1767.

Marble Hill, Twickenham
Now open / Free entry / Booking recommended / *english-heritage.org.uk*

ENGLISH HERITAGE/SAMANTHA NOTT

Charlie Watts, Keith Richards, Mick Jagger and Ronnie Wood, each the focus of an episode in a four-part series celebrating six decades of the Rolling Stones

WATCH

Stones' show

On 12 July 1962, a band billed as the Rollin' Stones made their live bow at London's Marquee Club. Named after a Muddy Waters song, the Stones were among a clutch of British bands inspired by the American blues. The significance of that show was so minimal at the time that, with Charlie Watts yet to join the band, even now nobody seems sure who played drums that night.

Whereas most of their early British blues contemporaries have since faded from memory, the Stones are still making music six decades later. The band's story is intrinsic to the UK's wider cultural history, especially that of the 1960s and 1970s.

How must all of this have seemed from the inside? A new four-part series offers clues, with intimate portraits of Mick Jagger, Keith Richards and Ronnie Wood, a Stone since 1975. Each member also contributes to the episode focused on Charlie Watts, who died in August 2021.

The series is part of a short season of BBC programmes devoted to the Stones.

My Life as a Rolling Stone
BBC Two and BBC iPlayer / Available to stream now

ALAMY/NETFLIX/DREAMSTIME

WATCH

Anne again

The final novel completed by Jane Austen, *Persuasion* (1817) tells the story of Anne Elliot. At 27 years old, surrounded by a family with financial problems, it seems as if life is passing her by. That is, until her former beau – Captain Frederick Wentworth, earlier considered unsuitable – re-enters the picture.

What follows is a meditation on snobbery, how other people influence our decisions, and – most of all – second chances. Like all of Austen's novels, the story has been filmed several times before. But a new feature-length adaptation, helmed by acclaimed theatre director Carrie Cracknell and starring Dakota Johnson and Cosmo Jarvis, should be a fresh treat.

Persuasion
Netflix / Streaming from Friday 15 July

Dakota Johnson plays Anne Elliot in a new film adaptation of Jane Austen's last novel, *Persuasion*

LISTEN

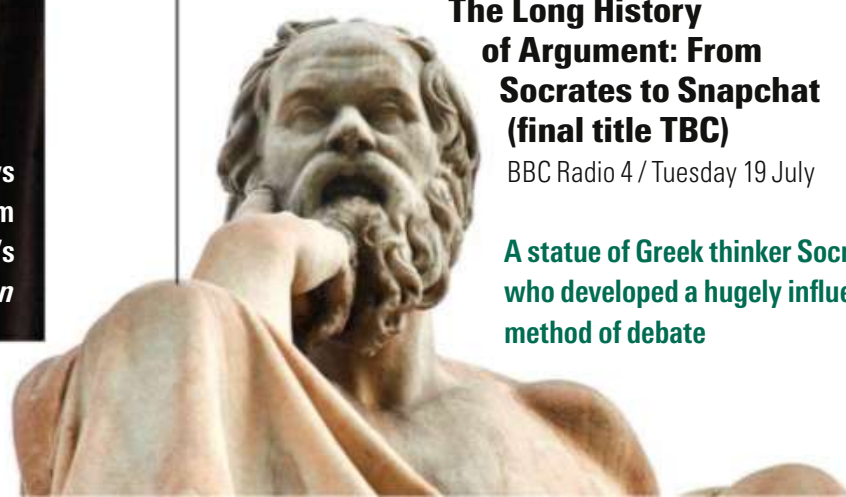
War of words

In the current era we appear to have arrived at a point where we worry that debates over some issues actually cause harm. But a few decades ago, in the mid-20th century, the suppression of debate was undertaken by those who also built concentration camps.

Against this backdrop, what role should debate play in our wider society – remembering that rhetoric was for millennia the preserve of educated elites? And does the quality of debate today measure up to that of the past? Could we be doing better when we engage in political, public and academic arguments?

Drawing on lessons from history, Rory Stewart explores these questions in a new three-part BBC Radio 4 series.

The Long History of Argument: From Socrates to Snapchat (final title TBC)
BBC Radio 4 / Tuesday 19 July



A statue of Greek thinker Socrates, who developed a hugely influential method of debate

Long-lost wonders

After being left to wrack and ruin for almost eight decades, the exotic gardens of Cornwall's Heligan estate were rediscovered and restored to their former glory. Thirty years since they opened to the public, **CLARE HARGREAVES** shares the gardens' remarkable story

It was not your usual toilet graffiti. Instead of amorous scribblings or obscenities, the writing in heavy pencil on the white-washed walls beside the lavatory was a stark one-liner: "Don't come here to sleep or to slumber." Below it were the signatures of those who had sat in the tiny cubicle, and a date: August 1914.

This graffiti was written in the gardeners' Thunderbox Room on Cornwall's Heligan estate, at the outbreak of the First World War. As Heligan's 13 gardeners signed those walls before marching off to war, little did they know that many would end their days on the battlefields of France and Belgium. Only four returned. With the disappearance of its workforce, Heligan's prized gardens, like so many across Britain, were "lost" too, sinking into a slumber that would last nearly 80 years.

They were awakened in the early 1990s by archaeologist and musician Tim Smit, who had moved from London to a farmhouse near Heligan. By coincidence he had met John Willis, a descendant of the Tremayne family who had owned the estate for more than 400 years but sold off the house in the 1970s. Willis invited Smit to accompany him in exploring what was left of his inheritance, and the two were joined by local builder John Nelson. Cutting through brambles and laurels as thick as their arms, the explorers uncovered Heligan's horticultural treasures, many brought back from far corners of the world by Victorian plant hunters. They ranged from tree ferns and palms, to rhododendrons grown from seeds collected by botanist Joseph Hooker on his Himalayan expedition of 1848–51.

> **"With the loss of its workforce, Heligan's prized gardens slipped into a slumber that would last nearly 80 years"**

But it was the names etched on the walls of the Thunderbox Room that set the tone for Heligan's subsequent restoration. Rather than telling the story of the gentry who had lived in the house, Smit resolved to celebrate the lives and skills of the ordinary men and women who had toiled in its grounds.

Gradually, Smit and his colleagues coaxed new life back into the productive gardens that once supported a community of more than 20. No original cropping plans remained, so pre-1910 varieties of fruit and vegetables were planted to make the gardens as authentic as possible. Beds were dug by hand and fertilised with manure from Heligan's livestock, just as they had always been. Today around 500 heritage varieties of fruits, vegetables and flowers flourish, preserved for the future.

Further south, the Melon Yard's red-brick walls are adorned with espaliered pears and fan-trained plums and greengages, and the flower garden's glasshouses produce grapes and lemons once more. The vinery is believed to be the only surviving example of a glass-house designed by Joseph Paxton (the creator of Crystal Palace) in the 1800s.

Heligan's most famous fruit, though, is the pineapple, grown from the 18th century onwards in a "pit" heated by regular supplies of fresh horse manure. Having got the pit working again, Heligan now produces around a dozen pineapples a year, some used in rum liqueurs served at Lost Suppers cooked by the gardens' resident chef, Nat Tallents.

In 2013, the Imperial War Museum registered Heligan's Thunderbox Room as a Living Memorial, and if you visit on Remembrance Sunday, you can join staff in commemorating the men who scrawled their names on those walls. Heligan is not just about priceless plants, but people too, just as it's always been. H

Clare Hargreaves is a freelance writer and trained horticulturist

VISIT For more information on visiting Heligan, go to **heligan.com**

THE LOST GARDENS OF HELIGAN/DAVID HASTILOW

Heligan's jungle pond. The estate's horticultural treasures range from exotic tree ferns to rhododendrons sourced from the Himalayas

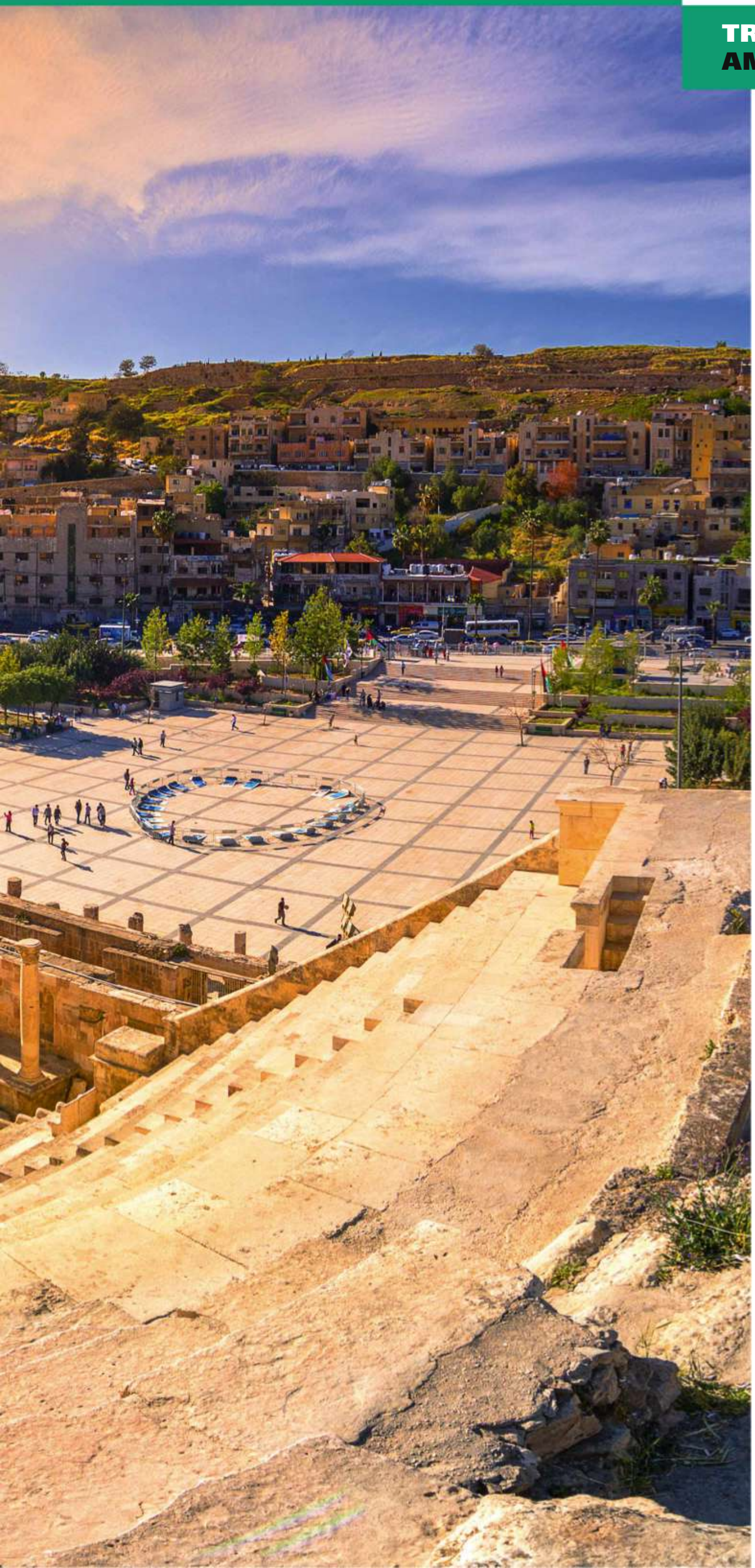
Charles Dyer (left) and Frederick Paynter (below) were two of Heligan's workers who fought in the First World War. Dyer never returned

ABOVE: Heligan's team of gardeners have used pre-1910 produce varieties for authenticity and to preserve them for posterity. RIGHT: The estate's ruined flower garden (top) and Melon House (bottom) before their restoration in the 1990s

Manure from the estate animals is used to fertilise produce beds

The Italian Garden, pictured in the early 20th century (right) and restored to its former glory after years of painstaking work by Tim Smit and his team (above)

Sunkissed splendour
Amman's Roman theatre and forum, among the largest in the empire, were built in the second century, when the city was called Philadelphia



GETTY IMAGES

An ancient and modern capital

Visitors to Jordan often focus entirely on the bounty of historical wonders beyond the capital. The country is, after all, home to the ancient city of Petra; Jerash's treasure trove of Greco-Roman remains; and the desert landscapes of Wadi Rum that captivated TE Lawrence (of Arabia). To do so, however, would be to bypass Amman itself, the country's modern heart and not exactly lacking in reasons to linger. This is a city in which to eat, shop and explore. It's a place to treat as much more than a gateway to the rest of Jordan.

Amman has some striking ancient history of its own, the most celebrated attraction being a second-century Roman theatre carved into a hillside and large enough for 6,000 people. A short hike or taxi ride away is the Amman Citadel, which contains the remnants of centuries of Roman, Byzantine and Ummayad custodianship of these parts.

As a relatively young capital – Jordan gained independence in 1948 – Amman contains much that is modern too. It has spread out over the hillsides that surround the downtown area, where you'll find numerous souqs. They are as colourful and fun as you'd expect, and the best places to sample authentic Jordanian cuisine. Few visitors leave without sampling the felafel at the legendary restaurant Hashem. For those with a sweet tooth, the many streetside outlets serving knafeh, a traditional pastry soaked in syrup and layered with cheese, will be a gastronomic highlight.

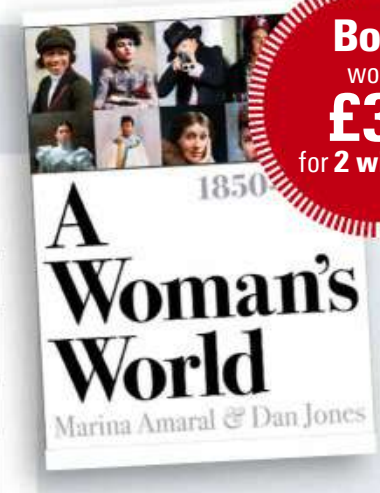
And if you do still feel like heading out of Amman, beloved treasures are within reach: the Dead Sea is an hour by road, Petra a three-hour journey, and Wadi Rum and Aqaba an hour further on. H

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

- **Tbilisi, Georgia**: another underrated capital and convenient gateway to natural and historical highlights.
- A city on a larger scale, but filled with similar influences, is **Istanbul, Turkey.**

By **Tom Hall**, travel writer and co-author of *Lonely Planet's Guide to Train Travel in Europe* (2022)

PRIZE CROSSWORD

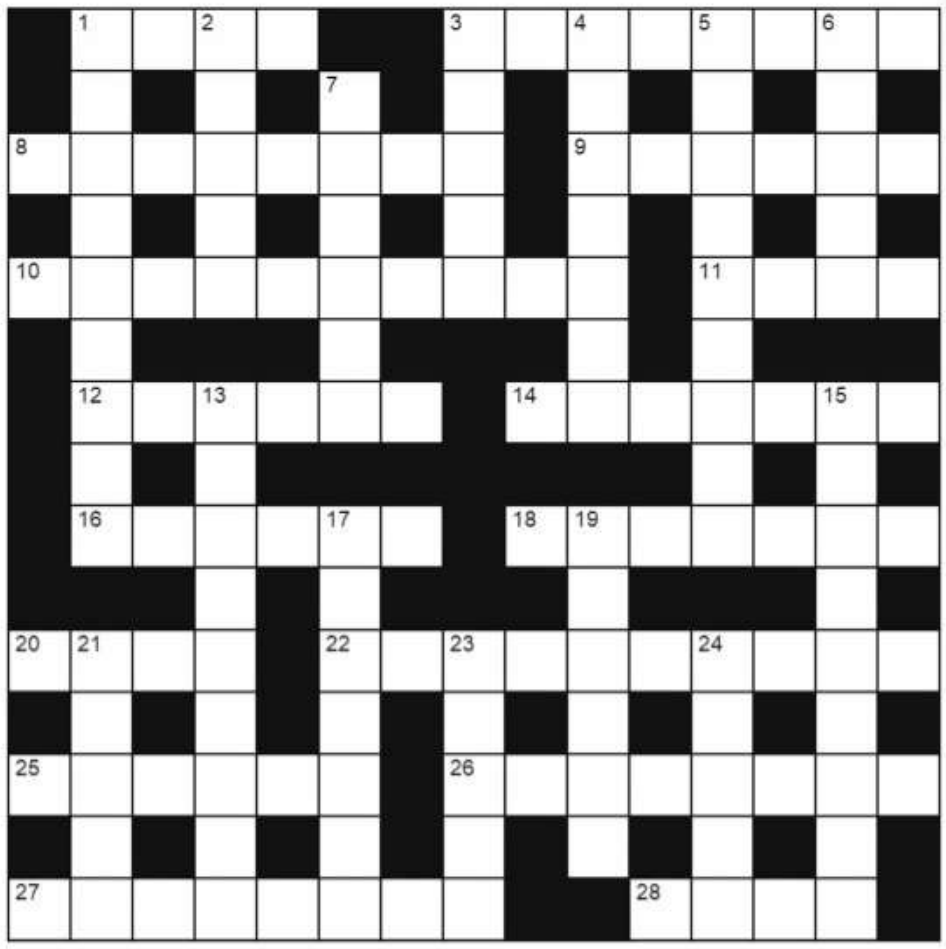


Book worth **£30** for **2 winners**

A Woman's World

By Marina Amaral and Dan Jones

Historian Dan Jones and artist Marina Amaral have come together once more to produce the latest book in their acclaimed *The Colour of Time* series. This volume documents the lives of women across the globe in the 19th and 20th centuries, from Queen Victoria to Japanese geishas, bringing them to life with stunning colourised photographs.



Across

1 Steve ____, martyr for South African black nationalism, killed in police custody in 1977 (4)
3 The three colonies forming the north African region of Tripolitania were Leptis Magna, Oea and ____(8)
8 Title of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian empire, assassinated in 1914 (8)
9 "Tommy ____" slang for a British Army common soldier, particularly in the First World War (6)
10 Influential 20th-century French fashion designer (4,6)
11 UK charity (initials) founded in 1868 as a society for "Improving the Embossed Literature of the Blind" (4)
12 Polish seaport where the trade union Solidarity was founded in 1980 (6)
14 One of two Germanic brothers claimed in legend to have led the first Anglo-Saxon settlers in Britain (7)
16 Island liberated from Bourbon rule by Giuseppe Garibaldi in 1860 and incorporated into Italy (6)
18 Town of southeast England that grew around the Royal Naval Dockyard established in Tudor times (7)
20 See 6 down
22 British commander at Yorktown (1781), whose surrender virtually ended hostilities in the American Revolutionary War (10)
25 Surname of the British conqueror of Sindh, and of the mathematician who originated the concept of logarithms (6)
26 One of the British coastal defensive structures built in the Napoleonic Wars (8)
27 A burgh near Wigtown, site of a fourth-century church, the earliest Christian settlement in Scotland (8)
28 Surname of celebrated Irish dramatist; also of Irwin, American author of major novel *The Young Lions* (4)

Down

1 William Seward ____, US inventor whose name is famously associated with commercial calculating machines (9)
2 Mexican artist, known for self portraits; had a fraught relationship with Diego Rivera (5)

This American writer was a champion of Cubism *(3 down)*

3 Surname of an American writer and art collector who was the life partner of Alice B Toklas and a champion of Cubism (5)
4 French educator, Louis, who devised a writing system using raised dots during the 1820s and 30s (7)
5 Inventor, Sir Richard ____, whose water frame, developed and patented in the late 1760s, produced superior cotton yarn to that of Hargreaves' spinning jenny (9)
6/20 Pejorative nickname given to a Hollywood star after her outspoken criticism of the US role in the Vietnam War (5,4)
7 See 19 down
13 The 16th-century German-Swiss physician Paracelsus was renowned as an ____(9)
15 Polish-born American scientist and mathematician, ____Ulam, who played an important role in the Manhattan Project (9)
17 Swiss location of treaty negotiations in October 1925 to secure a post-First World War peace settlement (7)
19/7 A 20th-century eccentric American millionaire manufacturer, aviator, and film producer and director (6,6)
21 River of the ancient Ethiopian kingdom of Shewa (or Showa) whose valley is famed for a high density of hominid fossils (5)
23 The ____Question, a dispute between the pope and the (reunified) Italian state, was ended by the Lateran Treaty of 1929 (5)
24 Margaret ____, the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for History (1942), which she won again in 1960 (5)

Compiled by **Eddie James**

HOW TO ENTER

● Open to residents of the UK (& Channel Islands). Post entries to ***BBC History Magazine*, August 2022 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA** or email them to ***august2022@historycomps.co.uk*** by 5pm on **3 August 2022**. ● Entrants must supply full name, address and phone number. The winners will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. Winners' names will appear in the October 2022 issue. By entering, participants agree to be bound by the terms and conditions shown in full in the box below. Immediate Media Company Ltd (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) will use personal details in accordance with the Immediate Privacy Policy at *https://policies.immediate.co.uk/privacy* ● Immediate Media Company Ltd (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) would love to send you newsletters, together with special offers and other promotions. If you would not like to receive these, please write 'NO INFO' on your entry. ● Branded BBC titles are licensed from or published jointly with BBC Studios (the commercial arm of the BBC). Please tick here ❑ if you'd like to receive regular newsletters, special offers and promotions from BBC Studios by email. Your information will be handled in accordance with the BBC Studios privacy policy: *bbcstudios.com/privacy. – bbc.com/editorialguidelines/guidance/code-of-conduct*

Solution to our June 2022 crossword

Across 1 Algonquin 6 Atom 10 Ranke 11 Means Test 12 Free trade 13 Yemen 14 Lloyds 16 Alfred 20 Bleriot 21 Scarpe 23 Rebel 25 Offas Dyke 28 Gorbachev 29 Nylon 30 Skye 31 Faversham
Down 3 Owen Tudor 4 Qumran 5 Isabella 7 Thermidor 8 Mutiny 9 Oswy 10 Ruffle 15 On Liberty 17 Recusants 18/2 Dorothea Lange 19 Demesne 22 Bruges 24 Lear 26 Fyvie 27 Yalta

Four winners of *Mudlark'd*

G Robinson, Poole; S Pegum, Barnet; M Acton, Nottinghamshire; W Bawden, Surrey

CROSSWORD COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

● The crossword competition is open to all residents of the UK (& Channel Islands), aged 18 or over, except Immediate Media Company London Limited employees or contractors, and anyone connected with the competition or their direct family members. By entering, participants agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and that their name and county may be released if they win. Only one entry permitted per person. ● The closing date and time is as shown under How to Enter, above. Entries received after that will not be considered. Entries cannot be returned. Entrants must supply full name, address and daytime phone number. Immediate Media Company (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) will not publish your personal details or provide them to anyone without permission. Read more about the Immediate Privacy Policy at *immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy-policy/* ● The winning entrants will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. The prize and number of winners will be as shown on the Crossword page. There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. Immediate Media Company London Limited's decision is final and no correspondence relating to the competition will be entered into. The winners will be notified by post within 20 days of the close of the competition. The name and county of residence of the winners will be published in the magazine within two months of the closing date. If the winner is unable to be contacted within one month of the closing date, Immediate Media Company London Limited reserves the right to offer the prize to a runner-up. ● Immediate Media Company London Limited reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions, or to cancel, alter or amend the promotion at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, or if circumstances arise outside of its control. The promotion is subject to the laws of England.

GETTY IMAGES

Here's a selection of the exciting content that's coming up on our website **historyextra.com**

Your guide to King John

King John is generally remembered as the villain from the tales of Robin Hood, and the man who was forced to issue Magna Carta in 1215. But was he really as bad as legend would have us believe? And what was it about his reign that provoked his subjects to demand such sweeping political reform? Marc Morris has the answers.
historyextra.com/king-john-guide

Podcast series: the End of Roman Britain

What really happened in Britain as Roman influence waned? In a new nine-part podcast series, David Musgrove investigates what we know about the end of imperial rule in fifth-century Britain – and what remains a mystery.
historyextra.com/podcast-series-roman-britain

How much do you know about the history of London?

Test your knowledge of the city's history – from its architecture and place names to notable events and famous residents in our latest history quiz.
historyextra.com/london-quiz

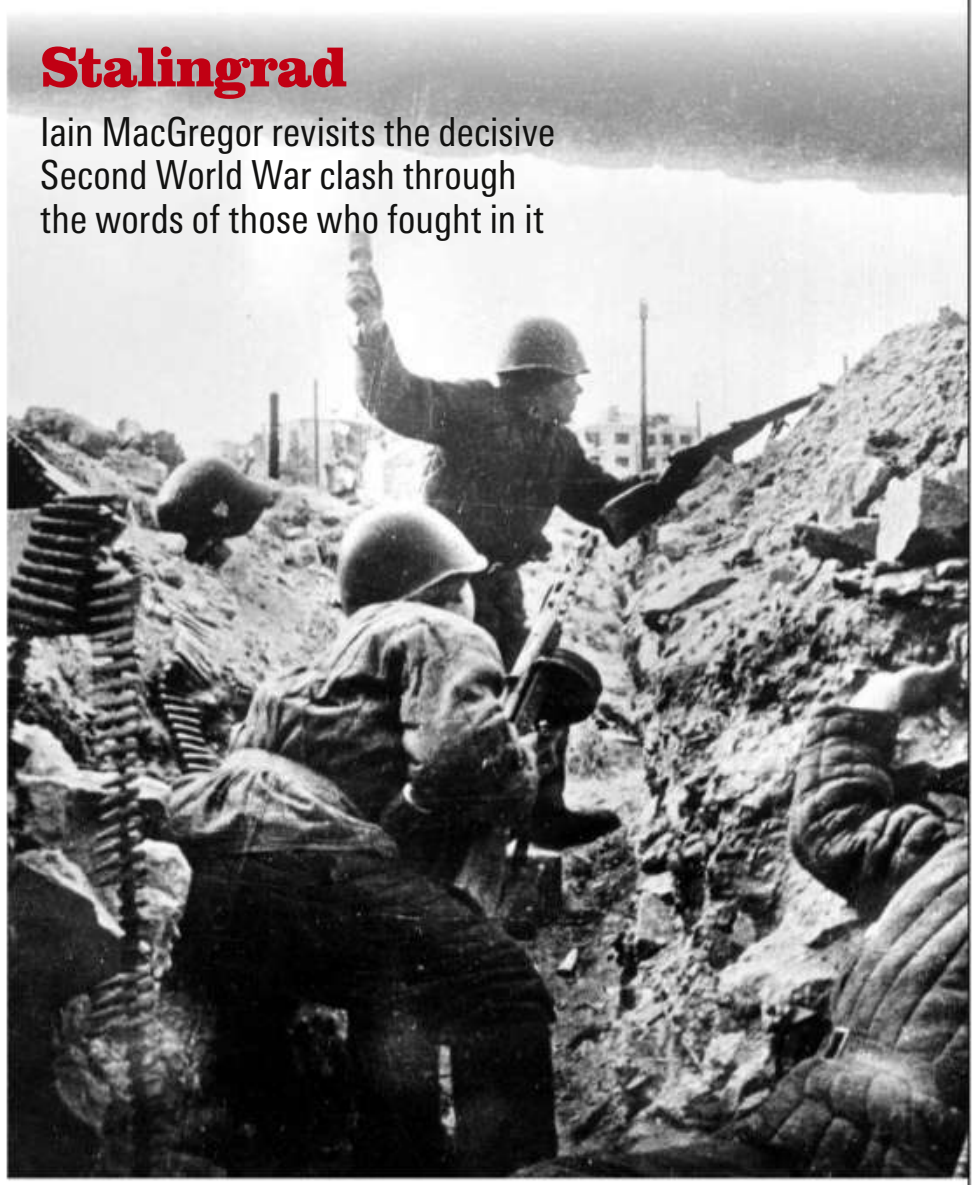
Newsletters

We've recently launched several themed newsletters bringing you the latest developments in some of the most popular periods of the past. Sign up to receive regular updates of historical news, as well as details of the new articles, podcasts and videos that are available on our website.
historyextra.com/newsletters

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

NEXT MONTH

September issue on sale 4 August 2022



Stalingrad

Iain MacGregor revisits the decisive Second World War clash through the words of those who fought in it

Medieval women

Janina Ramirez explores the lives of a group of remarkable, but misunderstood women

Partition 75

Kavita Puri offers a fresh view on the division of the British Raj in 1947

Reviled queen

Leanda de Lisle challenges the myths that surround Henrietta Maria, Charles I's unpopular consort

MY HISTORY HERO

Soldier, politician, diplomat and writer ***Rory Stewart*** *chooses*

Thomas More

1478–1535

Thomas More in a 1527 portrait by Hans Holbein the Younger. "The ethical value of his life lies less in what he achieved, said or did, and more in what he refused to do," says Rory Stewart

IN PROFILE

Thomas More was a lawyer, judge, statesman, author and Renaissance humanist, who served King Henry VIII as lord chancellor from 1529 to 1532. An opponent of the Protestant Reformation, he refused to acknowledge Henry as supreme head of the Church of England and the annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. After refusing to take the oath of supremacy, More was convicted of treason and executed. He was subsequently declared a saint by the Catholic church.

> "More was prepared to be hanged, drawn and quartered rather than compromise. That is, to put it mildly, unusual in a politician"

Rory Stewart is a former soldier, diplomat and travel writer who, as a Conservative MP from 2010–19, held several ministerial positions. He now co-presents the podcast *The Rest Is Politics*

When did you first hear about More? As a teenager watching the film *A Man for All Seasons* (1966), which tells the story of his final years. But I really became interested in him as an MP after reading the plaque in Westminster Hall – where he and his father practised as judges – commemorating the place where he was condemned to death. The more I read about him the more I realised how central that building, which I walked through every day, was to his life.

What kind of person was he? He was a scholar and spent a lot of time praying, but was also incredibly charming and funny in some respects. He clearly had a playful side – his letters to his friend Erasmus [the Dutch philosopher and scholar] are full of jokes. He combined that lightness of touch with some pretty tough political manoeuvrings to get where he did, and to retain the confidence of the king. There was also a disturbing side to him because he was said to have tortured heretics to defend his version of the Catholic faith.

What made him a hero? His ability to say "no". Politicians are encouraged to always say "yes" and compromise to stay in power. More may have started like that – he'd been a successful politician to end up as lord chancellor – but, ultimately, when asked to compromise around Henry VIII and his wife Anne Boleyn, he wouldn't do it. He was prepared to be hanged, drawn and quartered. That is, to put it mildly, unusual in a politician.

What was his finest hour? More's trial in July 1535. He remained resolute knowing that he could be killed. The ethical value of his life lies less in what he achieved, said or did, and more in what he refused to do. Ultimately for More, and other humanists, politics is an activity that requires not the perpetual campaign for power, but the possibility of refusing power. It is a vocation whose value can only be judged at its ending.

Can you see any parallels between More's life and your own? I'm obviously not remotely a hero or a saint, but I felt that the most important thing I did in politics lay in what I refused to do: refusing to serve in Boris Johnson's government because I disagreed with his stance on Brexit. It was the end of my political career, but it gave it some sort of meaning.

What would you ask More if you could meet him? I'd ask him why he served Henry VIII for as long as he did, given the horror of his personality and governing style, and to convince me that there was something positive to be said about that monster. H

Rory Stewart was talking to York Membery

LISTEN

Rory Stewart is presenting a new BBC Radio 4 series **The Long History of Argument**. For more details, turn to page 91

BBC RADIO 4

BRIDGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES

HOUSESTEADS ROMAN FORT

An epic adventure at the edge of an empire

Discover life as a Roman soldier

Experience a dramatic historic landscape

Explore the most complete Roman fort in Britain

BOOK ONLINE NOW AND SAVE
Search 'Housesteads Roman Fort'

ENGLISH HERITAGE

Step into England's story

The English Heritage Trust is a charity, no. 1140351, and a company, no. 07447221, registered in England.

Experience the original spirit of Norway

HURTIGRUTEN
Norwegian Coastal Express

Take a break with tradition. And culture. And heritage.

It won't just be plain sailing on a Hurtigruten voyage. You'll get the chance to immerse yourself in the Norwegian cultural scene, whether that's catching a midnight concert at the Arctic Cathedral or stepping back in time to the age of the Vikings.

Scan the QR code to learn more

12-day Classic Round Voyage

Flight-inclusive departures:
October 2023 – March 2024

FROM ONLY **£1,899pp**

Book now

Call 0203 733 5388 | Visit hurtigruten.co.uk | Contact your preferred travel agent

From prices quoted are in GBP and are per person, based on full occupancy of an inside two berth cabin, on a full board basis. Single supplements may apply. Prices are subject to availability. From price of £1899 per person is based on travelling from the UK, subject to availability and subject to change. All flights and flight-inclusive holidays are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. Please note some excursions are not included in the per person price and will be an additional charge (subject to availability). Images © Ørjan Bertelsen/Ole C. Salomonsen.

ABTA V7545